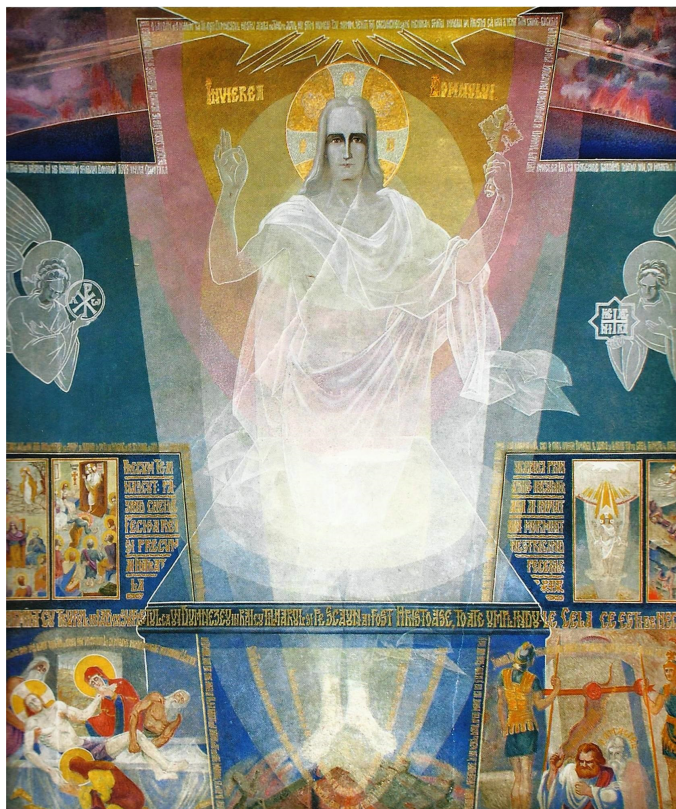


PRIEST PROFESSOR PhD ACADEMICIAN

DUMITRU STĂNILOAE



**JESUS CHRIST
OR
THE RESTORATION OF THE MAN**

-ARAD 2013-

The Saint of the Books¹

“Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae was reckoned to be the greatest Orthodox theologian of the past century. (...) This is the recognition that was received by Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae from important theologians from the Christian world in general, and especially from Occident. (...) He was compared to Henry de Lebas, Hans Urs von Balthazar (...), Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, or Thielicke (...); the name of the Priest Professor Stăniloae and his entire work must be placed into a gallery of great honor, which is reserved only to a few names, but in an indubitable way, I think, it must include priest Ioan Popovici, George Florovsky, and the theologian Lassky.

(...) I would add here that during the last years, especially in the last decade, it has been spoken more and more insistently about Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, being called with names like: “Dumitru the Confessor” or “Dumitru the Theologian”. (...) I believe that, sooner or later, the time will come – when Lord God will consider it opportune – which to be spoken in, more and more insistently, about the exceptional spiritual gifts which were held by Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, and why not, like some theologians tend to believe, about a possible sanctification of Father Dumitru the Confessor, or Dumitru the Theologian.”

¹ The text from the internal cover number one and the one from the external cover number two are transcripts of the Radio Trinitas broadcasting, entitled “Trinitas Dialogues”, from 04.08.2013, a rubric held by priest Bogdan Tifrea, who had invited priest professor **Ioan Teșu**, from “Dumitru Stăniloae” Faculty of Iasi. The interview was occasioned by the fact that the year 2013 was declared, by the Synod of Romanian Orthodox Church, as **Commemorative Year of Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae**.

Note: On the front cover is placed a mural painting, entitled “Our Lord Jesus Christ”, done by Hieromonk ARSENIE BOCA, another Saint Father of the Romanian Orthodox Church, who inspired, spiritually advised and upheld Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae, especially for translating, in Romanian language, during 45 years, the twelve volumes of *The Romanian Philokalia*.

“Olivier Clement said that in the two Christian millennia, in two thousand years of Christianity, there existed four providential personalities, gifted by God, in a certain space, in a certain context, and who had an essential importance in crystallizing and developing the Christian theology. The first one was, like the French theologian said: SAINT JOHN, so important through his works, and especially through the last book of the New Testament: the Apocalypse. (...) After another seven – eight hundred years, because this is the interval which follow at, one after another, these great religious personalities at - says Olivier Clement - we find SAINT JOHN DAMASCENE, who made for the first time a synthesis of the Christian teaching of faith. After another seven centuries, there lived SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS, the one who made, for the first time, a synthesis of the great currents and spiritual teachings – the ascetic and the mystical ones - of the Eastern Christianity; and look what said, in the end, Olivier Clement: after another seven hundred years, we have Priest Professor DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, the theologian who has turned the true theology to its sources: to the Holy Scripture and to the writings of the Holy Fathers.” (Priest Professor Ioan Teșu)

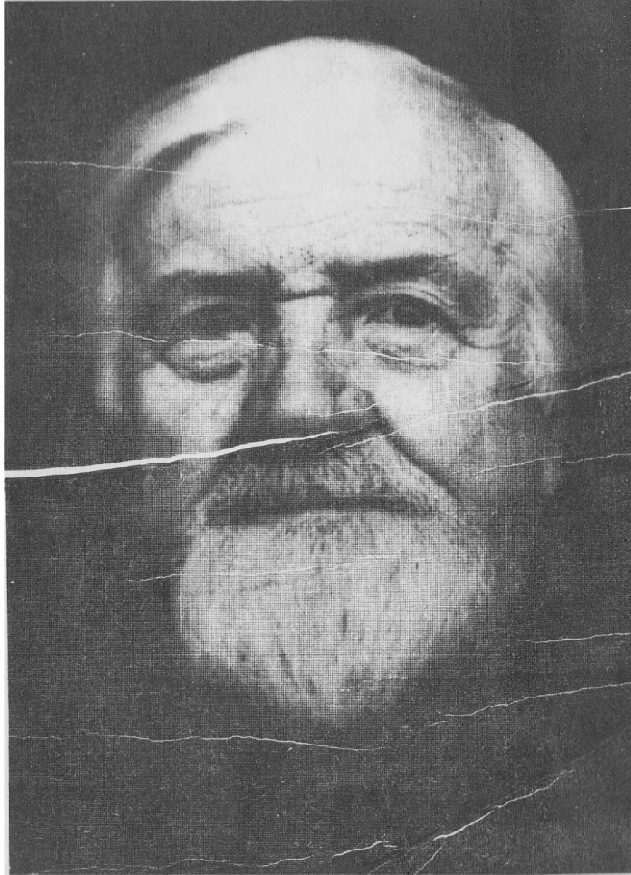
Dumitru Stăniloae

**JESUS CHRIST
OR
THE MAN'S
RESTORATION**

- 2013 -

Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae

Jesus Christ or the Restoration of the Man

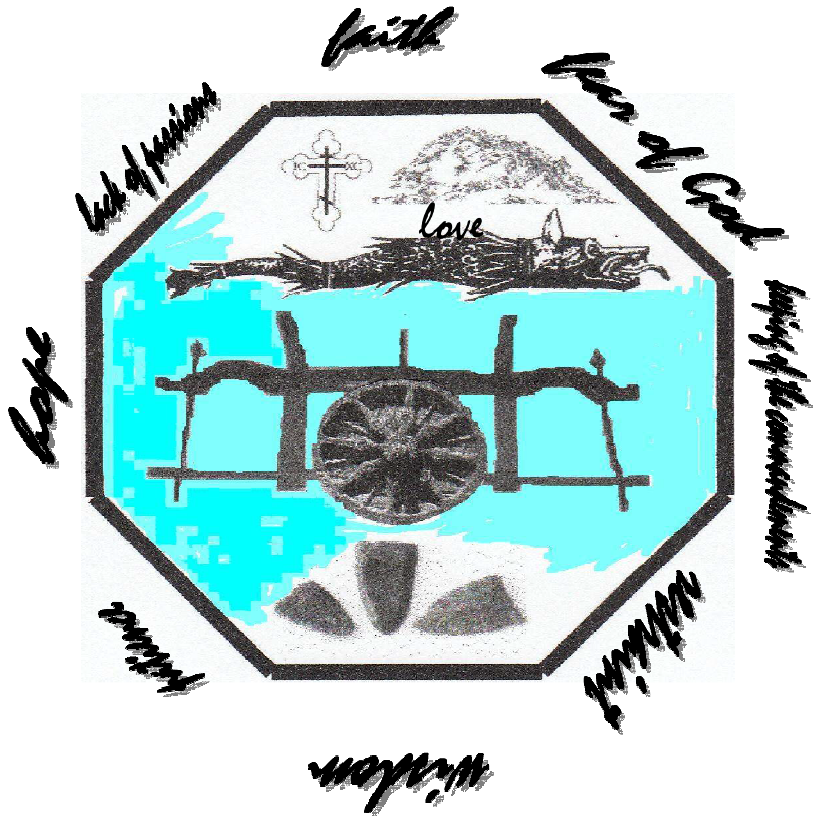


Priest Professor PhD Academician

Dumitru Stăniloae

Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae

Jesus Christ on the Restoration of the Man



into the inner inside

Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae

Special thanks to Michael Szellner and Aurel Wohlrapp, who took care of the notes in German language.

Special thanks to priest lecturer PhD Adrian Murg, who helped us – by verifying the Greek texts - in the difficult decision of renouncing to the foot notes in Greek language, because they were impossible to be taken from the Romanian edition of this book.

This book was translated in English language by Marius Golea.

Note: This manuscript can be freely used, copied, and distributed freely, without tendentiously modifying its content.

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Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae

Dear Reader,

We want to inform you that this translation doesn't have an official ISBN code, because the owner of the copyrights for the Romanian version, madam Lidia Stăniloae Ionescu, she didn't agree granting us the approval for undertaking this endeavor. We fully understand Her concerns which led Her to the decision to deny us the official consent to do this translation, because of the reasons that even us have highlighted in the Translator's Foreword to this book.

Anyway, madam Lidia Stăniloae Ionescu was touched by our huge gratefulness and love which we have for Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae, her father, who we consider the greatest Romanian Orthodox theologian of all times, and She has granted us the permission to translate this book for our personal use. In this concern, realizing that our profound personal interest is to spread the works of the great Theologian Dumitru Stăniloae, we have done our translation to be unofficially used and distributed absolutely for free. The other part, the one of the emergence of this work of the Academician Dumitru Stăniloae in the English language environment, in an official manner, we humbly let it to be fulfilled, with the help of God, if this is His will, expressing our gratitude, and our decision to donate our work.

Until then, this manuscript can be used freely, copied, printed, distributed, in these following two conditions: the first one is not to tendentiously modify the content of the translation, and the second one is that every copy to be distributed absolutely for free.

Marius Golea

Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae

Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae

**Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru
Stăniloae – the World`s Greatest Theologian
of the Communion and of the Love**

We think that in these days there it is taking place a great effort for recuperating the memories and the works of the great Orthodox Romanian Fathers, an effort which is upheld by the will of God. Immediately after 1989, but even more today, there have been published books after books, with more and more courage, stating about the greatness of these our Fathers, and we believe also that this is a moment of Revelation, a moment of need in the Big Fight, and also a help for the ones who will come.

The idea of translating this book has stricken us suddenly, without being a part of a personal career plan, after we have finished the book entitled “The Second Flood”, which is a Gnostic mosaic, under the sign of the Octagon.

Concerning our work to this translation we want to declare that, even before starting it, that we have asked for and we have obtained the spiritual blessing of the priest PhD lecturer Ioan Lazar, the spiritual guide from the Theological Faculty from Arad “Aurel Vlaicu” University.

Starting to translate the Book of Priest Dumitru Stăniloae, entitled “Jesus Christ or the Man’s Restoration”, our work was received

with mistrust, and this thing has made us to lose a little of our confidence, or better said, a lot of our vain glory... We believe now that the worries of the people, who did not give us any chance to finish our endeavor, were totally and fully justified. And we also believe that there are a lot of motifs to be discouraged to translate a book like this.

First of all, the work of Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae is partially not translatable! In any other language than the Romanian language, the writings of Dumitru Stăniloae are losing a lot of their rhetorical substance! That is firstly, because he spoke about God in the Orthodox dogma; secondly, because he used the way to communicate us through suggestion the most complicated things about God; and thirdly because his skills of Romanian language were so brilliant. The Subject of his work is the Person of God, about Whom, Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae wrote majestically. Who on earth, struggling to understand these so complex ideas, succeeds to translate them at so high understanding of the domain that the author had?!...

A main difficulty for any attempt to translate his books – with a cause so much admired by us, and praised, and enjoyed, and tasted... - it is the rhetorical genius which Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae had, while expressing things otherwise inexpressible. The author is a master of an

impressive array of rhetoric tropes: the metaphor, the paradox, allegory, adagios, aphaeresis, anaphora, anticlimax, antonomasia, apophthegm, archaism, commentary (maybe the most used rhetoric mean by the Professor when he translated the Philokalia, giving birth to such extended as the text footnotes reference), comparison, concision, conclusion, contraries, correspondences, description, dilemma, enumeration, epithet, euphemism, excursion, figurate, anthology, hyperbola, interrogation, inversion, irony, borrowing, poetic license, litotes, maximum, metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron, parallel, parenthesis, paronomasia, personification, portrait, repetition, reticence, synecdoche etc., and a special category, entitled “unclassified beauties”, into which we may include other stylistic figures not matching the categories mentioned before.

Another favored rhetoric method which Father Stăniloae preferred, it is the rhetoric innovation. Like in the case of Martin Heidegger, a philosopher whom, Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, has admired so much, he uses the language, the words, onto a superior plan where the subjects that are treated are also described through suggestions, through metaphors, because, even more in the case of Dumitru Stăniloae, the things about he talks to us are inexpressible in the current language.

An even higher difficulty for translation is represented by the use of the sound of word, to suggest, to tint, to shade, or to color the discourse, in order to create the elocution. Look for instance at this example: extrapolating the construction and the meaning of the word “theophany” Dumitru Stăniloae created and used the word “angelophany”, to describe the phenomenon of the apparition of the angels in front of the people.

His speech is the speech of a great orator, of whose greatness is like the ones from the mythical times of the Greek orators.

His demonstrations are going on this way: he announces some principle with some essential words; then, after the hypothesis, he retakes the main words on a superior level of generalization, and then he formulates the conclusions.

There must be highlighted the elevated and refined way in which priest professor PhD Dumitru Stăniloae builds his thesis. He uses the methods of argumentation resembling to the ones of Plato and Aristotle, establishing a cycle formed by a hypothesis, the argumentation and also the analyzing of the arguments, concluded with a general conclusion.

All the time, Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, a great linguist, uses genius formulations, like the following: “He has lived the death of everybody” (Part II, Section IX: The

Hierarchal Dignity, Chapter 4: The Death of Jesus”).

Trying to associate a general image to this book we have learnt that it is like the painting of a Romanian Orthodox church, executed by a master painter, maybe like the one from the Drăgănescu Church, which was painted by the great Romanian Saint, the Holy Father Arsenie Boca: every time you read this book, you discover new meanings, new nuances, and new perspectives. The reading of this book is like a continuous improvement of the understanding of such difficult aspects like those regarding the Christianity, and Jesus Christ, and God.

The Romanian version of the book contains quotes from diverse writers, in six different languages, fact that illustrates the great erudition of the author: Latin, Greek, French, German, Russian and English. Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae was a linguistic genius.

It is also important to the reader to know that Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae uses at the highest level the modern and the ancient Greek language. Quite amazing are his alternative translations for the same phrases, instances or words, with detailed explanations, and this aspect is most evident in the translation of the Philokalia in the Romanian language, a translation at which Dumitru Stăniloae, a monument of patience, has worked for about 45 years - before

and after his imprisonment in the communist prisons/torture centers - with the same love for God, with the same humbleness, and with the same faith in Jesus Christ and in His Revelation.

Another general aspect of the Romanian writings of Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae is the use of a wide range of words, and for some Romanian words there are not available direct translations, but only equivalences, which will have all the chances to be wrongly understood by the reader of another language.

Doing this translation we have wondered all the time: are we capable to do it? The only answer that we have found to save us from this doubt was to following: we are not a peak, in anything, but rather a place of meeting between the different high energies, an agora place, where the different information fluxes meet together and are expressed through the pen of the humble scribe that we are.

In our defense we can only say this: the predestination that we have felt doing this translation, it has caused us an increase of the will to do and to finish this translation, at any costs, despite any impediments, and, most likely, with the single and the most important effect which will be there: the spreading of the teaching of Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae.

Of course that our weak measures – and not only them! ... – they have been insistently advising us to renounce to this enterprise. But, with all the risks, we have considered that to

the such a great spiritual love of Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae - towards us the beneficiary of his sacrifice to write so many for us, to explain our position in front of God - we must respond with our love, by doing this translation, because how he was saying, **the love of the other one it "limits us", it demands us a response, and it urges us to communion, and it also makes us to raise up above our limits.** The love of Priest Professor PhD Dumitru Stăniloae has given birth to a vast theological work, the most important theological work from ever and forever in the Romanian Orthodox theology - illuminating so many followers. That is why, our very humble contribution, namely translating this paramount book of his, was necessary but also mandatory for us, in order to gain a little serenity by answering his invitation to communion with him, and inwards this, with God.

Bearing in mind the difficulties of this translation, the constant battle with the temptation to renounce at it, the fear not to be at its level, or, the temptation to let us carried away by the vain glory, the continuous fight with the lack of patience, the doubt that we will be ever capable to finish it, what else can we say that, from heaven, Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae, through his present book, was for us a spiritual guide, unveiling us not only the theoretical aspect of

his teaching, but also the way to practice it in the real life. That's why, after we have been given the understanding of this fact, we have been constantly praying him, to help us.

Priest Dumitru Stăniloae is the theologian of the communion between God and the human being. Almost all his writings speak to us about God like a Person, in three Hypostases, but undivided. The communion is the way, the key, and the basis to unite us with God. According to Dumitru Stăniloae, the ultimate goal of the human life is that of reaching the total communion with God. Communion it means Love. Love means everything! Otherwise: "If there is not love, nothing will be there".

During the translation, of course that the evil one has been fighting us constantly, in every way that he could hurt us, in order determine us to renounce to our endeavor. Being us an unknown writer in this domain, it has meant not to be received with so much confidence. Starting around the page 110 our confidence was disappearing; the texts of Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae seemed to us so unnecessary complicated; the footnotes seemed to be too long; we were invaded by thoughts of renouncing; our friends have exercised pressure on us to pay more attention to them, and not to spend all the time working to this translation; because of our sins, the health problems seemed to appear, blood pressure and eyes pain and

headache accompanied the work... In addition to all of these: how to evaluate our evolution in the knowledge of the translation process and how to value our translation? If we had said: yes, we have done a good translation, we would have fallen into vainglory. If we had not accept to value the translation, that would be equal to not accepting God`s grace. If we tried to disregard or to bury the gift which we have been given with, that would be an affront to God...

On the other hand, we have seen in the attempt of refining this translation further, in our worries about the correctness of the translations, in the fear not to do something wrong, an evil trap, which has been trying to delay us, or even to determine us to renounce to this duty of ours. Please, God Almighty, make this be Your will, not our sinful wills!

At the end of the translation of this book, we confess that there were a lot of considerations and affirmations, which we have not fully understood. And we think that it is quite normal. The profoundness of the knowledge of the priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae were given to him by his experience, by his holiness, by his advanced experienced approaching, talking with, living in and by God.

The quotes from Holy Bible, used like arguments by priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae, cited in the

content of the text or like foot notes, we have taken them from the King James Version of the Holy Bible, because of the perfume like incense of that ancient English language.

The writings of the priest professor PhD Dumitru Stăniloae have a certain original rhythm. It is a rhythm heard many times when a holy Christian Saint Father spoke to us. Sometimes, maybe all the time but we cannot realize that the phrase becomes an incantation, a prayer. The balance of the energies, the dance of the words, creates a symphony which draws its accords from the divine silence.

Working at the present translation, we have become more and more humble in front of the great work, mind, personality and highness of the priest professor doctor Dumitru Stăniloae.

The evil thoughts, during the time of the translation, due to our shallow faith, they have said to us that the priest professor PhD Dumitru Stăniloae was using too complicated words, too complicated reasoning, too long and too complicated footnotes, in too many and too complicated languages like: French, German, Latin, Greek and English, and that has have made us to feel some kind of hate against his excellence. Translating this book, it has become more and clearer to us, about how weak and full of wounds that we are. During such a difficult task, almost all our weaknesses were brought into the light and exposed by our thoughts

against such inspired by God work, of the priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae.

It was surprising to us the fact that priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae uses words which seem to be adapted after English words. Later, know in his important conferences and publications into the English language environment, and also acknowledging about his very important prizes granted by English and American important theological institutes, this aspect become an even more important argument for the geniality and multilingual capacities of Dumitru Stăniloae.

During the work of this translation we have learned how to fight against the lack of our patience. We, who was accustomed to write a few books a year, we have founded ourselves in front of a multiannual task, and our writer apprehension has driven us crazy and the amount of time needed to make us to slide towards despair.

In our endeavor we were encouraged many times by the image of the such a benevolent smile, of the priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae, who was watching us from the second page of the original printed book of the 1993, after which this current translation has been done, with benevolence and with care, knowing that all through all our worries related to this work of translation we have had expressed our lack of faith and our

dissolution into the spreading out all round of this work. But the Holy Father's prayers has helped us to receive from Jesus the gift to get this work done.

We are keenly conscious that every translator, working with a certain text, he forms his own style and his own language (vocabulary) for that translation, based on his experience, culture, and knowledge. But, brothers and sisters, the main goal for all the translation that it was and will remain ever, is that to make the God's word known, without put it in a danger of be mystified. The goal of this translation it is also to contribute to the spread out of the works of the great genius and saint that it was priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae.

We believe that some Romanian language nuances and words were never translated into English language, especially the ones regarding the domain of Romanian Orthodox Religion; all the more the elaborated affirmations with which priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae expresses the complicated lights which illuminate the depths of the Romanian Christian Orthodox Faith, into which he is the greatest theologian. So, dearest ones, how to cope with such a height of the theology a simple man like us, animated only by a faint hope to escape somehow without be disobedient in the fulfilling the mission to translate this fundamental book, of such a great saint father?

During the translation of the book, sometime we have wondered if there will be enough time to accomplish our endeavor. But, finally, we have realized that not the finished work counts but to work on it. This path has not an end. This translation cannot have a final version now; rather it must to be refined again and again, during generations... All of you, honored readers, are kindly asked to do it, to improve more and more the translation of this book, to walk the path with love!!!....

We have repeated some expressions or words in some instances or phrases, trying to make clear the original content without the play of genders of the words, so useful in the original Romanian version.

On the first stage of our enterprise we have tried to replicate as much as possible the words of the priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae. In the second one, we have tried to make the English text as intelligible as possible for the English readers. In the next stages, we have verified again and again the text, trying to make him worthy by the great stature of the Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, being, in the same time, more and more convinced that we have failed in our endeavor. The only thing that has remained after all, it was the faith that we are only an instrument and God works also through the poorest and simplest people, like we are, to achieve His goals.

This writing of Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae has such an acute sense of the Christian time, which we have never saw, even in the writings of the most important holy fathers from Paterikon or from Philokalia: "But the tension towards future, when refers to our own most intimate possibility, the death, makes us to turn at our intimacy, which we found it like something given, or like something which comes from beforehand. Coming back to ourselves, we then realize us like former ones. The past is a presence. In the extension we are living both the past and present and the future, and, in general, in each of the three ones comprise also the other two ones." (Jesus Christ or the Restoration of the Man, Romanian edition, pg. 201-202). His sense of time is mythical. This aspect really deserves a separate and extensive study, entitled, maybe: "The Christian time into the works of Dumitru Stăniloae".

We consider that our obsession to make a "as good as possible" translation, besides its impossibility to be satisfied, it is also a proof of our vain glory, so we must accept that the work that was done through us it is not perfect, to regain and strengthen our humbleness.

Struggling ourselves to make a perfect translation, did not we reject the help of God and His attempt to make Himself this translation? And also, how proud and blind must we be, to imagine that we can make a

good translation without the help of God? But, also, how not to be someone a lazy man, letting all the work and all the responsibility to God?...

We have oscillated from the sensation that we are free to translate however we want, to the dreadful responsibility and of the awful sensation that we are not able to correctly fulfill this job!

But, in the end, we have chosen between the two bad things: to renounce to do this translation (like so many people, even our friends, have advised us, or even have urged us) or to do this translation even there will be some critics to highlight our small measures - the one which we believe that is the smallest of them: we have translated this book with all the risks, even there somebody will find some language clumsiness or even some unacceptable mistakes.

On the measure in which we were closer and closer to the end of the translation, the opposition grew up stronger and stronger, but for shorter and shorter periods of time. But, after every culminating moment of the fight, like through a miracle, our mind seemed to opens wider and wider for accomplishing our duty.

Like characteristics of the structure of the text we must remark that, in the Romanian edition of the book, as the introduction has 36 pages, the conclusive chapter has also 36

pages. Also, the number 10 for the sections, referring to the figure 10, with which begins in the Greek language the name of Jesus. This book is filled by numerological symbols.

We also have remarked that there is a changing in the way into which Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae calls the son of God, during the writing of this book: mostly Jesus, at the beginning, Jesus Christ in the middle, mostly Christ at the ending part. It seems that, more and more important, becomes the sacrifice on the cross. In fact, this gradually changing, without specifically being declared into the book, it follows the changing in the work of Son of God on earth and in heaven.

The first hand translation was ended in 03. 18. 2013, after a horrible struggle with ourselves, to endure and pass over the resistance, of every kind. At the end – which the priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae has kept to be something special – especially for the weak measure of the one who was translating the text –, namely an entire page lie a foot note, in French language and also a fragment in German language and in Greek language...

At the final of this first translation we have felt liberated, but we have also felt something more: with some time ago we have ceased to enjoy, being happy of something. In the final four pages of this translation we have felt the liberty to enjoy, being happy for this translation. We have had the sensation the

Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae

priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae, with his smile so full of goodness, has gifted back to us, the capacity to enjoy of something – a thing for which we will remain forever grateful!

Over all, the work at the translation of this book has taught us that the main obstacle in front of us, are ourselves.

**English language translator
Marius Golea**

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The Biography¹ of Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae

The greatest Orthodox Romanian theologian of all times, the priest professor PhD academician Dumitru Stăniloae was born on 16th of November 1903 at Vlădeni, Braşov County, and he dies on in 5th of October 1993.

He studied at “Andrei Şaguna” High School from Braşov (1914-1922) and he studied at the Faculty of Letters from Bucharest (one year) and then at the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi (1923-1927), where he obtained the PhD in 1927. He was sent by the Archbishop Nicolae Bălan to specialization studies of dogmatic and of history of the Church, at the Faculties of Theology from: Athens (1927-1928), Munich, and Berlin (1928 – 1929), doing also documentation travels at Paris and Belgrade. Returned from studies he was appointed substitute teacher (1929), provisional teacher (1932) and after that, definitive holder (1935) of the department of Dogmatics at the “Andreiana” Theological Academy from Sibiu², where he functioned until 1946 (he taught also Apologetics 1929 – 1932 and 1936 – 1937, Pastoral Theology in 1932 – 1936, and the Greek Language (1929 – 1934). After the election of the rector Nicolae Colan like bishop of Cluj³, Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae was

¹ This biography it is taken in its entirety from “Romanian Theologians Dictionary”, from:

<http://biserica.org/Who`sWho/DTR/S/DumitruStăniloae.html>

² A City which is the capital of the county with the same name: Sibiu, which is situated in the middle of Romania, and is a ancient academic centre, laic and theological.

³ A Romanian county situated in the Middle - West of Romania.

appointed rector of the Academy (1936 – 1946). Ordained deacon in 1931, priest in 1932, stavrophore dean in 1940; he was member of the diocesan assembly of the Sibiu Archdiocese and archdiocesan adviser, editor of the “Romanian Telegraph” Newspaper (between: January 1934 – May 1945). He will be transferred through appointment at the Faculty of Theology from Bucharest, at the department of Ascetics and Mystics (January 1947 – 1948); in the year 1948 when the faculty has become Theological Institute of University degree, Dumitru Stăniloae was assigned titular professor of Dogmatic and Symbolic Theology, with an interruption in the period of 1957 – 1963 while he was in detention in the communist prisons; Professor Dumitru Stăniloae comes back to the University in the period of 1965-1973; after his retirement he activated like consultant professor for doctoral studies.

Over six decades Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae undertook a multilateral scientific activity, especially in the domain of the Dogmatics, being considered one of the most important Christian theologian and thinker of the world. He published books, studies, and translations. He was appointed in diverse delegations of the Romanian Orthodox Church which visited other Churches: Germany (1970), Greece (1971), Coptic Church from Egypt (1971), Vatican (1971); he was delegated to the second Congress of the Professors of Orthodox Theology from Athena (1976); he participated to numerous consultations and theological conferences, organized by diverse Commissions of the Ecumenical Council of the Churches, in many countries; he held conferences like invitee, at the faculties of theology from: Athens, Thessalonica, Paris, Strasbourg, Bonn, Heidelberg, Tübingen, Freiburg, Geneva, Oxford, at the

Ecumenical Institute from Bossey in the U.S.A. and so on; Dumitru Stăniloae was part of the Romanian Orthodox Commission for the theological dialogue with the Evangelical Church from Germany, participating to numerous meetings in both countries. His rich theological activity put in the service of the Christian Church and its unity, it was appreciated by being granted many distinctions: “doctor honoris causa” of the faculty of Theology from Thessalonica (1976), of the “Saint Serge” Institute from Paris (1981), of the Faculty of Theology from Belgrade (1982), and of the University from Bucharest in (1992); the prize “Dr. Leopold Lucas” of the Evangelic University of Tübingen; the “Saint Augustine of Canterbury Cross” granted by the Primacy of England (1981) and so on.

Priest professor PhD Dumitru Stăniloae was correspondent member (1990), and then titular member of the Romanian Academy (1992).

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FOREWORD

In Jesus Christ, the embodied Son of God, are included all man's powers of recovery from all times and, implicitly, all wisdom treasures¹ (Col. 2, 34). In Him we have the answers to all problems which are raised one after another, out of theoretical interest or out of keen struggle with the hardships of life, to human spirit. He is ever actual and He anticipates continuously the present.

The solutions which start, for example, to be considered as appropriate, after painful researches and experiences, by the mankind from today, were indicated from long time ago, into an undeveloped shape, into the mystery of the persons and into the work of Jesus Christ.

I have tried hard to emphasize, as much as my humble powers allowed me, mainly the contemporary importance of Jesus Christ.

I have had to fight in this attempt with a double weight. First, with the magnitude and with the depth of the subject: it exceeds any human powers. However you would try to get together and to reconcile as many as possible of the aspects from which was seen and understood Jesus Christ, expanding and interweaving the viewpoints into a more comprehensive synthesis; and then you realize that you cannot be even close to the richness and the profoundness of the answers, suggestions, and conclusions which result out of His Person, indeed risking over to sacrifice

¹ "Col. 2: 3: In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

the closed and harmonious crystallizing of the multitude perspectives under which you have dared to look at this mountain of the human history. On the other hand, it is awfully hard to emphasize, writing about Jesus Christ, the aspect of His presence, His correspondence with the living problems of our time, without letting a shadow or using in a too general manner the dogmatic formulas in which the ecumenical synods have included the doctrine about Him. A writing which aims to uncover the significance of Jesus Christ for the world, have to be: fresh, current, speaking to each time in its language, but which also have to maintain a close contact with the Tradition of the Church, and which to make easy to the readers to identify themselves in Jesus Christ, the new portrayed one, the Jesus Christ about Whom the Church confesses in its teaching and in its cult.

Writing this book, I have asked all the time the good Lord for helping me to vanquish the most significant hardships, for my endeavor to have as result a book both alive and new, but also faithful to unchanged tradition of the Church. I have to specify here, however, that the present writing is not actually a dogmatics book. Starting from the dogmatic formulas, I have tried to solve in their light the problems of the human life, individual and social ones, which do not actually compose the object of some dogmatic definitions.

This book is a book of thinking, of Christian meditation in a broad sense. The dogmas are concise formulas, with a delimited object of

study, and just in the brevity and in the delimitation of their content it is given the possibility to remain as unchangeable axis in the continuous changing of the life, which to guide in general lines, without to hinder in its variability. Without claiming to have written a fully satisfying book about Jesus Christ, I will be happy if it serves, on one hand, to strengthening the conviction about His divinity and the justification of the life which is lived related to Him, and on the other hand, if it is like a starting point for drawing in, of other monographs, to this subject.

Dumitru Stăniloae
Sibiu, God`s Baptism, 1943.

INTRODUCTION

I. THE REVELATION LIKE HUMAN FULFILLMENT

I. 1. The Trans-Subjective Object of the Faith

The faith is the certitude about God's existence, like a supreme reality as Person, which does not stay in the continuity of substance with us and with the nature, and about the things which have been communicated to us, by Him, through the Revelation. The believer is sure that sometimes he is in a personal relation with God, like being in a similar report with a second person; though God is unseen.

The first and the most important feature of the faith is that of not being a simple inward phenomenon of our soul, but of being a relating to a reality that is not confounded with the act of belief, or with something which is part of the human being. The belief can be conceived and it can exist only like a part of the dual whole: faith – and – the object of the faith beyond it.

Even more than the knowledge, the faith lives out of the surety of the reality of the object beyond it. The heart of the faith is the certitude. No knowledge can have such certitude. And the certitude refers just to the trans-subjective reality of the object of the faith.

However, because by and large, the knowledge also lives out of the certitude of its objects, the analysis of the report between faith and reality it can use the indication offered by the order of the natural knowledge.

Into the knowledge we deal with acts “through which the conscience affirms a reality as it transcends

itself"¹, get over itself to something from beyond her, forgets itself, it counts, and it looks towards something else than its subject. That is why this witness of conscience it may provide grounds, and it is shown by the fact that not through any act, the conscience transcends itself and affirms a trans-subjective reality. Our subject has the faculty to discern between experiences clasped with a trans-subjective reality and between dream and fantasy². Otherwise, the conscience is the ultimate instance at which we can challenge ourselves in the matter of the objective reality. Any other testimonies hang also by the conscience, and present themselves all together with it. The denial of the objective reality is deprived just by this last support of testimony of the conscience.

N. Hartmann³, by wanting to prove the trans-subjective reality of the objects of the knowledge, he showed how much the act of knowledge is flooded by emotional acts, which also have a transcendent character launching from beyond conscience. He discerned three groups of such emotional acts which accompany the knowledge:

Essential receptive acts, in which something happens to the subject - he endures something: the acts of experience, of living, of suffering, and of enduring. In these acts the subject does not master or observe, but he is mastered, and touched by something (*Modus des Betroffenseins*).

Pre-receptive acts, which precede experience or living: waiting, premonition, the condition in which the subject is ready for something, the fear, the worry, and the hope. In these acts the subject is in the anticipation of pressure mode (*Modus des*

¹ **JOHN CULLBERG**, *Das Du und die Wirklichkeit*, Uppsala, 1933, 176.

² **JOHN CULLBERG**, i.c.

³ *Das Problem der Realitätsgegebenheit*, Berlin, 1933.

Vorbetroffensein). It is in them a certainty that “something is coming”.

Prospective – active acts, through which the human being anticipates spontaneously the future, he is asking for it, and he is challenging it: the wish, the will, the action.

In all these acts we experience a “harshness of reality” (die Härte des Realen), either it presses on us before any own initiative, or it reacts, it resist at our action. This pressure or resistance, we feel it particularly in the meeting with other persons, from where it follows that this conscience of the reality culminates into the conscience about other persons⁴.

The pressure and the reaction which we feel it, from the trans-subjective reality, in these acts, shows that reality it is not a simple appearance, a phenomenon produced by our conscience, but a true transcendence of our subjectivity.

Making abstraction of the concrete and psychological particularities from the analyze of N. Hartmann, John Cullberg⁵ found out that what distinguishes the structure of act of conscience through which it is affirmed the trans-subjective objects of the reality from the structure by which is

⁴ **N. HARTMANN** shows that in the acts through we want to do something to the persons, we are experiencing, in addition to their reality, also with the reality of moral values, like being independent by our subject. Even from the first moment of our intention regarding the others, it turns towards us like a riposte, the merit or the guilt, through which we are experiencing agree or disagree with the moral values (pg. 24). But if these values, neither are not depending on us (but they are above us), nor by all people together, they also cannot exist like independent entities. They must be based into a supreme will, sovereign of the entire reality. Concretely, the emotional experience of the moral values, their feeling, it is also a feeling of God.

⁵ W. c. p. 186.

not affirmed such a reality, it is for, in the first case, the objects impose themselves to conscience like entities which cannot be arbitrary changed or considered as not existing, like it happens in the second case. An imagined castle it depends on me how to imagine it, in a way or another, but a real house forces me to know it like it is^{6,10}

Many of those told about knowledge it may be applied to the faith to prove, in the same measure, the reality of its object. The faith it is also an act through which conscience concerns about something trans-subjective, through which it transcends herself. Her core, it is an act of knowledge, the confidence about something from beyond the immanent world. The difference with the common knowledge consists only in the subject, which is beyond of all that is seen and in the measure that it is known and understood the content of the object. But an unfavorable importance to the faith cannot have this difference, since the fact to be seen it is testified by conscience, and she testify just as certain, also about the reality of her object of faith. Through this we do not think that the visibility of some objects was a fact produced by conscience, because in such a case it would not impose so keenly and it would not be a characteristic only for some of them, but we say that only through conscience the reality can be ascertain and only the conscience is the instance for confession.

In the last analyze, it can be said about the known world: I believe that it exists, and about the world of faith: I know that it exists⁷.

⁶ Through this orientation towards ontology, the philosophy get closer again to Christianity, because the fundamental feature of Christianity is the belief in reality as a product of God.

⁷ **We do believe that this affirmation is a fundamental one, being of an ultimate importance, like many other that priest professor PHD academician Dumitru Stăniloae stated through all his wonderful and genius works.** (*translator`s note*)

But, even more than the proper knowledge act, the faith it is dressed in emotional-transcendent act and states, which, also, are fitted perfectly by the characteristic found by N. Hartmann at the analyze of the facts which accompany the knowledge.

The faith experienced by the believer not like a personal product, like a result of his efforts, but like a pressure exercised upon conscience by a presence or by the overwhelming signs of a presence, which is one with the reality which he believes in. The subject feels himself conquered, included, and touched. Only after these states take place, which include in it also the knowledge specific to the faith, or only in their frame, takes place also the activity of the believer, a will to believe even more.

At last, the general feature that Cullberg finds in the structure of the act through which the conscience transcends itself in knowledge, namely the force which the object imposes itself with like real to the knowledge, we fully find it as determining the act of faith too.

The believer cannot overlook God like being real, he cannot think something out of what he knows like being revealed by Him, else than he is convinced that it was revealed to him.

N. Hartmann does not establish like criterion of the trans-subjective reality, the physical character, but the "harshness" which it imposes itself to us with, by making us to "endure" it, to "experience" it, to "live" it⁸.

He even says that the "experience" in discussion "must not be identified with the empirical in the scientific and gnosiological understanding. There is a difference of another kind, more elementary than that one, and more enrooted in life, more human and more fundamental in the same time, more appropriate to the

⁸ W. c. p. 16.

use of language than that of the empirical knowledge”⁹.

But if it is like this, we do not have any right to not recognize that the religious experience, more intense and more stable than all others, would not be produced by a trans-subjective reality, like itself it is convinced.

N. Hartmann speaks about an experience of being pressed or carried out by a trans-subjective force, to which cannot correspond something real¹⁰, even if that something remains hidden to the knowledge¹¹. But the experience of a part from reality it stays in direct report with the degree of participating to it. When you are a simple spectator you cannot experience some realities which unfold next to you¹².

One might object towards the applying of the ones found in knowledge, that the objects impose themselves to all human subjects like being real, while the object of the belief only to some of them.

But the fact that it imposes to many it is a full proof about its reality. Neither the realities knowledgeable on natural way, particularly those of spiritual life are not known and or not confessed by all people. The philosophers affirm too often the experience of some spiritual realities, which not impose to all consciences, like the world of objects does. It is true – even if this fact also it is denied by many philosophers – that everyone could reach the knowledge of them. But who tell us that would not reach all the people to the knowledge of faith’s realities? In any case, the fact that the overwhelming majority of consciences are sure about themselves cannot be explained, taking account by the analogy offered by the domain of knowledge, but only through the incursion of some signs or data of the

⁹ W. c.

¹⁰ W. c. p. 17.

¹¹ “Was es eigentlich „war“, war mir geschah oder zustieß, kann mir verbogen bleiben“ (p. 18).

¹² L. c.

object of the faith in these consciences.

I. 2. The Provenance of the Faith

The second main feature of the faith is that it arises into the human being in a miraculously way. The human's certainty about divine reality is born otherwise than natural world's knowledge.

We will continue to analyze the act of faith from this second point of view, by trying to find out the way which a human comes to believe in. What we will conclude through this analyze it will contribute to more a complete understanding of the reality of the object of faith and of the real existence of a divine Revelation.

If you ask anyone who believe, on which way the faith has dwelt in him, the answer will be that through the sermon or the life of another, if he has acquired the faith at an old age, or through the parents, if he has came with his faith from his childhood. There is nobody who gains his faith through nature, namely from the impersonal seen world. First of all, practically speaking, such a case is impossible. Any human being, before gaining the capability to contemplate the nature, he lives in report with other older people, with his parents, with the ones who raised him up. Usually, in every religious society, the man receives the faith in that phase of his life in which it hasn't been clarified to him a special report between him and the nature. In case he lost his faith latter on and he gained it again by contemplating the nature, this would not be a proper kind of a new faith, but it would be a re-awakening of the first one. But, it is not heard about somebody to reignite his faith only through a pure contemplation of the nature. Every individual who lost and re-gained his faith he met one or more people who manifested

through word or deed the certainty of faith and this fact produced also in him, suddenly or gradually, a rebirth of faith. The nature can have an auxiliary role, of consensus of what he has been hearing from others and it has been rebirthing in him. Even less faith it is born, through the nature's contemplation, into a man who hasn't received his faith in his childhood. A pagan won't reach the faith in Christ if he does not enter a Christian society, or if he hasn't meet a missionary. By and large, nobody come to an articulate faith, a sure one, other than through a man or through a society confessing that faith.

The nature indicates God, but its speech is not so clear or so sure. The nature's speech with a general and not-precise character, it clarifies itself only for the one who has received the faith from another man. Nature indicates a reason, a source, a cause beyond it, to which we come by sudden intuition or by tightened logic, but it does not unveil clearly the features of this reason. That's why some people think this reason in a pantheistic way, others incline to consider it like a person, but neither the first nor the last are sure. Even if they consider God like a person, they will at most reach the true idea of God. But from here to certitude, which constitutes the being of faith, it is an abyss which the man cannot pass over by his own initiative and efforts.

There is within man, doubtlessly, the impulse to search for the world's reason beyond the world, to transcend those visible, being driven also by theirs and by his own obvious insufficiency. And this impulse, this necessity to transcend the immediate things, we can call it a fundamental availability to faith, helped by the structure of the world and the existential structure of his being which is so bitterly being experienced, who cannot find satisfaction in the bounds, miseries, and powerlessness, neither in what the world gives him. This inclination towards faith is a

part of the shadowed face of God, which has remained within man. It is common, to all human beings and it stays at the basis of all their endeavors of raising them by thinking, by art, and by ethical deed, so that we can tell that it is the aprioristic heart of everything that makes the man a being differing from animal. It cannot be pulled out of man, but only together with his humanity, by descending the man into animalism, together with his ceasing to watch upwards, towards wide horizons.

And we also can tell this need for searching and for finding the supreme reason of the world, it is the ground on which the power from above finds a proper place for anchoring itself, in order to produce the faith within man, and it is the natural organ which can be transformed by the descent of divine grace into the spiritual eye of faith with a clear and certain sight. Karl Barth's affirmation that into the human being does not exist any remnant from God's face on which to hook the gift of faith and therefore, the one who believe in God's word is exclusively God Himself – The Holy Ghost placed in man believes to the Word, so all is an inter-Trinitarian action – leads to an absurd denial of the Revelation¹³.

But this predisposition towards faith it doesn't come to completion - in a proper faith - through nature¹⁴, no matter how important a role the nature

¹³ To be seen among others concerning this question: J. FEHR, *Das Offenbarungsproblem in dialektischer und thomistischer Theologie*, Freiburg (Schweitz), Leipzig, 1939, p. 46. FEHR gives also the following quote from BARTH's book, *Christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf I Band* (München, 1927): "If God reveals Himself, this means that God Himself enters in the arena like the known one and the one who knows, like the one who speak and hears" (pg. 39).

¹⁴ It isn't here about natural revelation, which it is the discovery

has in the recollection of the man, in his stimulation towards searching and thinking of what's beyond nature; even to searching for and to thinking at God.

The way the faith comes within man it is through another man. And we do not speak only about the faith like a content, which it is taken for granted, but also like an act and like a power. The most wonderful thing it is the force which the certitude of faith is communicated with, from the man who has it to the one who saw him. Who is around of a man who confesses tensely or calmly, but firmly, his faith, that one hardly can resist not to become himself a believer. The certitude from another man it gives birth to the certitude within us. Does it comes, this mysterious thing, from the trust that we have into another man? No, because the one who believes is, in other references, a man who detains a more modest place in our consideration and in the society's consideration, in comparison to much more spiritually endowed persons, and to whom we are more bonded. In an indescribable way, we are overwhelmed by the certainty that that person does not take out of his own powers the certitude of his faith, but there it is working the power of God a power that is above of any human being's powers. We know that the man, by himself, cannot get out of doubt, and that he cannot grant certitude to himself. If we meet somebody who has it, we have the certitude that we are looking at the shadow of God's hand in working. Paul the Apostle insisted over the fact that just because he was presenting in the front of his listeners with the countenance of a man having no power, or having no prestige, the word of God was working more powerfully through him. So, through the man who believes we have the certitude

of God besides Christ not only through nature, but also through man, so also through a tradition which remained from the primordial state of man.

that we see God beyond him, and the One Who is working through him on us, in order to make us believing, it is again God. The other's faith is the environment, the path through which God conveys the faith to us. Of course, what is wonderful in this is not only the fact that God works, but also that He works just through man, that He speaks to us from a man. The key word used by the philosopher Karl Jaspers to show the quality of the concreteness of the thing to unveil to us, when we are able to receive it, the transcendence, it fits as well as possible especially the man of whose faith is the occasion which ignites within us the certitude about God.

But just because it is a man like us, he couldn't give to himself, by himself, this certitude which we are feeling like an element from above the world, the man through whose mediation the faith is produced within us, he couldn't reach his faith otherwise but like we do, through the certitude of other or of others. So, each man who believes, he refers, on one hand, to another man, who believed before him, and on the other hand, to God, Who shows Himself in an unspeakable way but surely being working into the faith from whose he received his own. The faith is the product of the man to man report and of God's work, Who is active in this report. The faith is born from man and from God in the same time, or from God through man. Everyone's faith indicates towards the past and towards heaven.

But where it continues into the past to, this sending from man to man? Until to that man who showed himself to the people who were listening to him and seeing him, as being so different from them, through the certitude of his belief, than those ones were sure that God's work is active in him in a way which overwhelmed the work of God from any man who believes. His faith has an overwhelming massiveness,

an imperial impetuosity; his faith raises itself transparently like the stone peaks of some huge mountains, and over the man who remains, considered in himself, an insignificant remnant. That man speaks with amazing clarity and evidence about God and of His will. It is something in him that has been never observed in another man, so that the ones who have come in relation with him they have realized that here has been produced a direct intervention of God, filling up and tightening the soul on a measure and intensity that are not possible to be produced through the faith of another man. He himself confessed that he was awakened not through another man's belief, but by directly experiencing God.

The man at whom we meet the absolute certitude of faith, without receiving his faith from another man, because neither was him capable to give it to himself, he couldn't acquire his faith except directly from God. This is the prophet and he is one of the organs which the divine Revelation descends through, into the human society.

But, because any prophet does not bring faith on earth for the first time the, but he refreshes it with an unusual energy and highlights certain elements from its content, the most important prophet is the first man who believed. Through him, for first time, the Revelation descended into the world. And, because the man without faith he is not a man, the first man who believed, and the first man who received the Revelation, he coincide to the first man in general.

But we will not insist here on the way which the divine Revelation is introduced into the world in. We are mentioning only the fact that its propagation is being done through people, during the history. Although, not like people would by themselves in conveying the Revelation, like in case of transmitting different cultural goods. In order to be a transmitter of the Revelation, the man must be conquered by the

work of God, which produces in him the faith, but this conquest takes place through a man who had believed before and so on, because, otherwise, the man wouldn't have been a simple propagator of the Revelation, but he would have descended the faith again on earth. The propagation of the Revelation is accomplished through the chaining the generations of people, during history, and not only through them, but also through God.

The communication of the Revelation is made by "sending" the man to another man, but into the work of the "messenger", of the "apostle", there is God Himself with him. Jesus, sending his disciples to preaching, nigh to His Ascent to heavens, He promised that He will be with them to the end of time.

The results which we have obtained in the course of the exposé until here, they will be clarified, if we are trying now to highlight the capacity of the man to be propagator of the Revelation, and the value and the fulfillment that gives him this role. This will help us understanding even further, the motives for which the Son of God has become man.

I. 3. The Man, Like a Propagator of the Revelation

This problem has to be formulated in the followings questions: What the Man is, in order to be chosen by God like a Revelation's propagator? What makes the man able to fulfill this mission? Why does not every man directly receive the revelation? Or why does not the man receive it through any other means, and not through another man?

In other words, how it comes that God can speak to us better from another man, or that we feel God more penetrating when He speaks to us from another man, than from an object?

We must see, in the first place, what makes our

fellow man to be different from the world of objects, be them fix or moving? What retains us, what notifies us, what strikes us at our fellow man, differing from what the objects offer us? It is not the case to analyze ourselves to see what we find in us different from objects, plant, and animals, and then to attribute that to the other people. It is about the totally special experience that we have while meeting another man, like provoked by him, experience which we cannot have when we look at ourselves with the other sight, but which we can provoke to others, but we cannot provoke to ourselves. And the another experience of the man, but not mine, in what he has like a man, different by everything is given on the objective level, we are having it in the first place and in an accentuated way, when faces us like a second person and addressing directly to us.

And then we are concerned about the man as second person, as the one who speaks directly to us, because from him each of us has received the faith. It is true that seeing a crowd or a man praying, it strengthens our faith without them being in direct communication with us. But no one has reached his faith without anybody ever confessing him his faith, in direct speaking, and nobody will feel the growth of his faith if, by watching to a group of people who prays, he does not update, having also the help of the memory, a personal state like that in which he finds when is in direct *me/you* report with another person. If he does not feel that one or those ones like ones who directly ask him to pray – even if those do not observe his presence – their pray will not have such a powerful effect of invigorating his faith.

We discover the man in what he has different by everything that is given into the order of massively present things, as matter: like life, like laws, like deeds, especially in the hypostasis of the second person, of *you*, or only for we have one or other, as such.

Through what the man presents himself to us as being different from any reality from the surrounding world, when we meet him like a second person? We know his body being part between the entities which took place into the order of the seen world, also when we see the man like a third person. His deeds, his emotional manifestations, we see the also to the persons with whom we are not in direct report, and we can enumerate them among the happenings of the world.

The very special experience that we have while facing a man like a second person, it is that he does not stay anymore like an object in front of us, but like something who demands us, who claims us, and not like a physical entity, but a spiritual one. Everything that surrounds us it seems to us like being laid down around us, at our disposition, it belongs to a world of objects in which we do not see any intention directed against our will, but staying or moving indifferently to our existence, put in there in purpose to be used, to be embedded in ego's domains. Nothing rises against us in the way that our self it rises against them. There are, of course, mountains, rivers, beasts, which have a force superior to ours, and they seemingly dominate us. Some of them have even an aggression force, not only a resistance one. But we do not see in any of them the intention to rise against us. We are feeling ourselves as being above everything, if not necessarily through physical power, than through our conscience as subject. This last thing we can experience in the contact with another human who meets us as having the quality of a second person. We have met here a subject. The experience of this subject is different from the one of our subject. The other's subject does not produce to us the experience that we are masters over him, but he opposes our conscience that we are the single center of the things; we are feeling this time

that we are somehow reduced from the status of a master, of center, and we are feeling above us, as limiting us, a stranger subject¹⁵. We do not have this experience, however, on each time we are facing a man like a second person. Often, we do not let him even to speak, but we only command him, and even when he is speaking to us, we indulge ourselves to watch him from above, by disdaining him, or by contemplating the possibilities that resides in him to satisfying our demands, our plans to extend our power or our cravings. Then we do not see in that man anything essential which makes him different from the objects' world. We do not experience him like a you, like a second person. The fact that he stays in front of us is not yet a proof that we entered with him a *me-you* report - because of how many things and animals do not stay in front of us without getting out from the category of the ones without subject. When we do not experience man's character as a subject in report with us, even if he stays in front of us, it seems that he stays backwards to us, not forwards, like the entire world of objects it appears to us as staying. In order to

¹⁵ LOUIS LAVELLE, De L'acte, p. 407: "Mais, ni la résistance de l'objet, ni celle de l'idée, n'épuisent la notion de résistance. Aucune d'elles n'est une résistance impossible à surmonter... Par contre, il y a une résistance que je ne surmonterai jamais, c'est celle qui m'oppose une autre liberté, c'est à dire un être qui n'est pas moi et qui fonde son indépendance sur une activité dont lui-même dispose... Il ne sert de rien d'ailleurs de prétendre que cette volonté, je puis agir sur elle, la plier et la fléchir de quelque manière. Nous savons bien que nous n'agissons alors que sur les sentiments et sur le corps, c'est-à-dire sur toute la passivité qui lui est associée. Mais au moment où elle donne son adhésion, c'est elle qui la donne, par un acte qui ne peut venir que d'elle, puisque c'est lui qui la fait être. Et, en ce sens, quand une autre volonté me cède, elle me résiste autant qu'elle me cède, puisque cet acte même par lequel elle me cède, s'il n'est pas un simulacre, est encore le sien".

experience the character as subject from another man towards us, we have to restrain the massive flux of selfish impulses and to pay him attention. Not only by watching him, because this is not enough. His person puts us in the situation to contemplate a world on which we are framing into the ego's domain. When we watch a person, if we are only watching him, we will do it for ourselves, in order to find out if we like him or not. We have to pay him attention by listening to what he is telling us. The word is the main pointer of our fellow subject. Not a word through which it is expressed a logical impersonal sense, like the one which the teacher develops through, a theory, or he describes the constitutive parts of an insect. That word can be followed detached by the concrete person, and then its own meaning becomes an object of thinking, of our subject. Only the word which unveils the will of our co-inhabiting it unveils us directly his subject. But we can let even the sound of this word to pass by our ears, if we are not available to restrain our selfishness, if it is overwhelming in ourselves the thinking at our plans, cravings, and interests. And this peril stalks us especially when in the other's word we do not sniff but an egocentric willingness, an intention of dominating us, and to use us. Then it produces in us the reaction of our own selfishness, which makes us impervious to the experience of others subject.

Only that will of the other, expressed by word, it helps us to intensely experience, clearly and durably, his subject, which we feel that it does not follow a selfish goal, a narrowing of our subject to the state of an object, but it seeks our communion, our understanding, and our love. Only the other's word, which asks us also for a word, an answer to the query, the word which moves between us it gives birth to my and to your subject, but this is not a monologue word²⁰. Only then a human person becomes a real

you to us when he makes also out of us a real *me*¹⁶, fully loaded by the subject's character, of the *me-you* report.

The true *me* does not live in isolation, in passionate affirmation of the egocentricity, and neither in the descending to object, under the mastering of the unique sign as subject¹⁷.

We have said before that the man's experience, at the second person, we distinguish it by the fact that, differently from everything that is in the world, he appears us like a subject who limits us. Now we can add that on man, in the fullest existence possible, in his role of *you*, we experience him like a subject who leaves or raises us on the subject level. The report between *me* and *you*, established like this, it is a report between subjects, or better said, it is a subjects communion. Discovering the subject of the fellow human, I have become a subject, not by the fact that he does not touch me, he does not ask me anything, but by the fact that he asks for my love, that he asks me for a free approach. What I am experiencing it is limit and liberty in the same time, it is obligation in front of somebody, it is duty of obedience, and yet there is joy to fulfill that will, and there is free and happy impulse to serve¹⁸.

¹⁶ **FERDINAND EBNER**, das Wort und die geistigen Realitäten: „Weil das ich und Du immer nur im Verhältnis zueinander existieren, gibt es ebenso wenig ein absolut doloses Ich, als ein ich loses Du zu denken wäre. Das Wort ist des Junige wodurch nicht nur die Existenz, sondern vor allem das Verhältnis beider konstituiert – „gesetzt“ – wird“, p. 19.

¹⁷ **MARTIN BUBER**, Op. c., p. 36: „Der Mensch wird und Du zum Ich“, „Ich werde am Du; Ich werdend, spreche ich Du“, p. 18.

¹⁸ **LOUIS LAVELLE**, De L'Acte: «Je n'aime qu'au point même où j'obtiens le contact avec cette liberté qui n'est pas la mienne et qui délivre la mienne au lieu de l'asservir... La

It is power from another but yet it is a sentiment of own power. In the light of this report we understand how between grace and liberty there is no antagonism, but the liberty grows by grace. The grace is neither predestination nor the abolition of my person; and the liberty is not the pride with own "justice"¹⁹. But, even if into the other's word it manifests the willingness for communion and not an egocentric will, we still will be able remain deaf to his appeal. He flashes for an instance in front of our conscience, and then we no longer hear except sounds of words. The he has fallen off his quality as man for us, namely of you, of subject who searches for communion, in order him to remain an object with a precise and modest place among the other objects²⁰. The other's subject, his willingness for communion, what we are calling as *you*, he does not impose itself forcibly to our knowledge, like the world of objects, like the sound of the word, like logical meanings²¹. It is required from our part an effort to experience the

liberté demeure une simple possibilité tant que l'amour n'est pas né. Mais agir par amour c'est, pour chacun de nous, agir comme de soi-même. L'amour est donc l'actualité de la liberté », p. 532-533.

¹⁹ Die Antinomie von Freiheit und Gnade lösen wir nicht durch einen logischen Gedanken, sondern durch den Hinweis auf das irrationale Geheimnis, das mit der persönlichen Beziehung eines Ich zugigem Du gegeben ist", W. Schmidt, Zeit und Ewigkeit, 1927, p. 384.

²⁰ **M. BUBER**, Op. c.: "Das einzelne Du muss, nach Ablauf des Beziehungsvorgang, zu einen Es werden. Das einzelne Es **kann**, dusch Eintritt in den Beziehungsvorgang, zu einen Du werden", p. 42.

²¹ W. c. p. 204. See also Louis Lavelle, W. c. p. 408. "Mais, seule la résistance d'une autre volonté précisément parce qu'elle met un jeu une activité que je n'exerce pas moi-même, n'est d'une expérience, mais d'une fois".

other. The grace, still requires us, for we aren't imparted with the grace without our personal effort. John Cullberg says that we get to the other subject by faith²². We must believe the word of whom we talk to, a word which he tell us through, about his willing to be in communion with us, for only on this way, only through word, we can ascertain the existence of this will. We can add that this faith is brought together or prepared by the restraint of egocentrism, by the appeasement of the noise made by our egocentric inclinations, which prevent us from paying attention at the other words, so through them to hear his subject.

Since through this kind of restraint and attention, or through this kind of faith, we have found ourselves in front of other's subject, his reality, though beyond and of other category than the reality of objects, it imposes itself to us with a bigger force than theirs. But with a force whose reception is continuously depending on our liberty, and on our will to believe. To the conscience waked up at its duties, by the calling of the neighbor, the reality of this one overwhelms the entire objects' world. We perceive other's subject like a limit, like a power which forces us, and which claims us, as long as the objects' world appears to us, with all the blind resistance of some of them, like a domain over which the possession of the ego it can extend limitless. And, because of the degree of reality which it shows itself to our conscience with, the objects world depends on their resistance to our arbitrary, the reality of your subject, though accessible

²² M. BUBER, Op. c.: „Den Menschen, zu dem ich Du sage, erfahre ich nicht. Aber ich stehe in der Beziehung zu ihm. Erst wenn ich daraus trete, erfahre ich ihn wieder. Erfahrung ist Du - Ferne ", p. 16. - „Was erfährt man also vom Du? " - „Eben nichts, Denn man erfährt es nicht". - „ Was weiß man also vom Du?" „ Nur alles. Denn man weiß von ihm nichts Einzelnes mehr ", p. 17.

through faith, it appears to my conscience with an intensity superior to that of objects world's reality.

Let's remember this result, adding it to the ones told at the beginning of the study about the reality which claims in front of the conscience the objects of the faith, even more than the knowledge's objects, for which, also, we have not other criteria that they are real, except the conscience's testimony. It is a new proof that we are not entitled to attribute to the knowledge's objects, more reality than to the objects of the faith.

The reality of another as a subject, it is not different, though, from the reality of the objects only by not imposing itself as a given thing, but it unveils itself only to them who believes it, but we can say that, in a certain manner, it owes its very existence to the faith of the fellow human.

We understand if we have in our sight that, sometime, when our call for communion remains without an echo, we sink into the darkness of our selfish life. Or, if we do not call someone to communion, is won't wake up in him the true *me*: or, in the end, if he calls us without any result, we will condemn him to death in loneliness. Somebody must have a great inside support to be able to exist like *me*, when neither I or another answers his calling to communion. Into the selfishness, in passions, in the loneliness of the failure to communicate itself, the self longs, and descends into an ill existence, like a tortured shadow. Like we unveil and "create" the somebody else's subject through faith, in the same way the subject within us gets born and strengthened through the faith of our fellow human. "The intimacy of my being it may also be stated through another, grace to a act of faith fulfilled in front of me, which concerns the act through which I affirm myself like a liberty and which, in a certain sense, even exceeds it, by

strengthening the use that I'm making of freedom, which does not always inspire me the same confidence that I have in the other human being, often letting to me much doubt. So I am upheld by another one in affirming not only of what I am, but also of what I could and I should do"²³.

"It may be possible to say that I feel always the necessity to be upheld into existence by another's judgment and I am sinking into despair or insanity when I no longer have his assistance... To contempt, to ignore somebody, it means wanting to through him into nothingness. But only the another's love, by making me object its of, it can touch into me not only what I'm showing or what I'm doing, but what I am, namely my pure intimacy and my eternal existence"²⁴.

The another's love for me it is not separable by faith, like its basis. On the other hand, the another's love strengthens me only when I believe in him. Through the bond of the faith the subjects grow up. "It is admirable that settling down which makes the faith that I have in the others' existence to be the condition of the testimony which they give me, the testimony that I need for"²⁵.

How much are we living through the other's, and through the attention we pay to them, through the tension, through the outcry about communion, even if not fully accomplished, it is shown us by the fact that, however selfish would our life be, however much absorbed by the selfish passion fulfilling, through everything available to us – even through other's persons – though, the life giving nerve, of ours endeavors, it is the preoccupation by others' opinion, it's the permanent thinking at others, at their praise, at their respect, at their eyes which we believe they are

²³ LUIS RAVELLE, *De L'Acte*, p. 100.

²⁴ LUIS RAVELLE, *W. c.* p. 99.

²⁵ LUIS RAVELLE, *W. c.*

watching us, even though, actually, they aren't. We are living like some actors continuously preoccupied by what will the spectators say, about the way which we mirror in their soul. If a human being had been sure that nobody has followed him with his attention, that man couldn't have lived, and he would have lacked the oxygen. Even when we do not live into communion, we cannot get out from its disfigured and excruciating frame²⁶. Only a full animalism would help us to get out of it completely.

The whole human society is a web of relations, of partial communion with some of our fellow humans, because of the fact that haven't been tried yet, with others, or by the fact that they have been tried but they have failed or haven't been able to last. Only few of our relations are complete fulfillments of the communion; or maybe none of them.

If the accomplishing of the true human subject is due to the fellow human, on each one will press a heavy responsibility for another. Can I say that I have to always wait for the others' calling to communion, to serving, to love, and only if I'm not answered then I'm guilty for the relapse of that subject in darkness? Have I always to wait for a *you* to become *me*? But how can be born that *you*? - through a *you* of him, another then *me*. Then, me too, since I have been awakened through the calling of a *you*, I have, at my turn, to awake into other the subject whom to be *you* to me²⁷.

²⁶ W. SCHMIDT said: "Liebe und Hass sind ja überhaupt die tiefsten Triebfeder der Gesichte. Althaus und Hirsch haben nur eine sekundäre Sphäre berührt wenn sie den "Entscheidungscharakter" zum Wesensausdruck des Geschichtlichen machen". Zeit und Ewigkeit, Gütersloh, 1927, p. 386.

²⁷ J. CULLBERG, op. c.: "Meine ich-heit ist aus der Gemeinschaft mit einen Du geboren, dadurch wird es mir möglich, das Du eines anderen ins Leben zu rufen", p. 205.

So, the human being is responsible for his fellow human. We have seen that the establishing of the *me-you* relationship it is accomplished through faith. The one who calls me to communion, he does that through faith, because, even if he does not see, he believes that he can wake up in me a subject capable of communion. If I also believe in him, I will be resurrected and the communion will be established. My possibility to believe it also depends on my endeavor, but it also depends on the faith which the another has in me, it depends on his love from faith. The more powerful, the more resilient his faith will be, the surer is that I will believe and, by believing, I will be resurrected like a *me* of the communion, like a true *me*. My fellow human must believe hardly in order to resurrect me, and I, the same, will have to endeavor to believe in him in order to be resurrected and to become a deep believer if I want, at my turn, to save others.

But this believe with the help of which the another awakens me, he cannot take it from himself. To believe in me and to place himself into the hypostasis of being debtor to me, because only that way he can awake me, he have to believe that I was given to him by somebody superior to him, like a duty, like a mission to awake me by serving me and to serve me further. Where is a duty, there is also an obliging one, and this two differ between each other²⁸. The one who indicates me like a duty for my fellow human, He can be felt only like the Supreme Master of both of us. And that is God. The faith which the another has awakened me, it is faith in me, for it is, at the basis, a faith in God. And the faith in the subject of who is awaking me, which takes birth in me from his faith, it has also at its basis the faith in God. The spiritual birth of a man from another, through establishing communion

²⁸ J. CULLBERG, w. c.

between them, due to his accomplishing of the transmission of faith, which is not only a humans work, but it belong to God in the first place. And the maintenance of the *me* in the human being and of the communion with another, it depends on faith and this depends on God. The Revelation`s propagation from man to man, it is, in conclusion, the same like the birth of the human *me*, the same with the continuous establishing of new communion relations.

Thereby, the transmission of the faith is appropriate and necessary to be done on this way, from man to man, so that, together with the act of the faith transmission, to be born also the complete subject, the communion subject in each individual.

Besides, the human being appears to be the most appropriate for producing the faith in his fellow humans, whereas the absolute resistance that be encounter at man, like subject, makes us, through itself, to realize that we cannot identify us to the absolute reality, but we are thinking about a common principle, superior to us and to him²⁹. Through an essential structure, which can be depicted only from much more perspectives, each human conscience from a spiritual society it is to all the others the most adequate intermediary of the bond with God³⁰. Besides this, God, by revealing Himself to us, always through a subject, who in this quality he has the power to claim us, he makes us experiencing more adequately His

²⁹ LOUIS LAVELLE, W. c. p. 407-8. "Or votre volonté est pour moi beaucoup plus qu'une chose... Elle este ce qui précisément m'oblige a ne point m'identifier moi-même avec l'activité absolue... et a remonter jusqu'à un principe commun au qui nous participons tous les deux ».

³⁰ Idem, W. c. p. 402: "... les différences puisement entrer en communion dans une société spirituelle ou chacune d'elles sont pour toutes les autres médiatrice entre l'acte pur et son être propre ».

character of Supreme Subject, who claims us with an absolute power.

God, by arranging on this way the propagation process of the Revelation, He wanted to make the man realizing how much is in debt with his fellow human on which depends his faith, and how much is obliged, at his turn, to other fellow humans, whose salvation depends, to some extent, on him. Through the same act of faith dwelling in me, God wanted to bind me to Himself and to fellow humans, because the sin is isolation in a way or another. If each one had obtained the Revelation bypassing his fellow human, he wouldn't have bound in his conscience the most important act of his existence and the permanent condition of his spirituality on another, and, thereby, the tendency of pride from man, not receiving such a manifest disavowal, it would have found even more ground for affirmation.

In general, the true spiritual birth of the human being it is realized through communion establishing, but this cannot be established but only through the faith on which, one bringing, makes to light up into the other³¹. But the true faith into the human being fellow, in my duty to wake up him, to save him, I can have only if I believe in God. Only if God is a You from me, the supreme You, I can wake up or I can recognize in every fellow human a You³². If the faith hadn't come

³¹ The true faith prolongs itself through love. That's why it is assigned also to love the creation of communion estate. F. Ebner said: "Der Glaube setzt das Ich im Menschen in ein Verhältnis zum Du, die Liebe Verhältnis wirksam", *Wort und Liebe*, p. 174. "Durch das Wort... ist das Verhältnis des Ichs zum Du" (das Wort und die geistigen Realitäten, p. 21). But "Zum Glaube Wort gehört der Glaube aus Wort. Ihn braucht nicht nur der Hörende, sondern auch der Sprechende" (*Wort und Liebe*, p. 178).

³² F. EBNER, *Wort und Liebe*, p. 136: "Die Duhäftigkeit des im Bewusstsein des Menschen nicht nur mit Gott, sondern auch mit den Menschen". The man, earning in his

through another man, then it would have missed between people the most profound and intimate bond.

This is the same to say that, through faith and only through faith, it may be produced the true cohesion and brotherhood among people. Only through it the people get born, through mutual aid, in spirit, by overcoming the bodily life. And the birth in spirit it means rising at the rank of a personality³³. Only in the role of transmitter of faith, the feeling of being responsible it rises to the supreme intensity, knowing that on him it depends not only the life from here, but also the eternal life of his fellow human. But the feeling of responsibility it's the essential condition of the personality and, in the same time, the main element which links man to man.

I. 4. The History, Like Environment for the Propagation of the Revelation

If I transmit the Revelation depending on *me-to* report with my fellow human and, in serving him, I am doing it through by answering his concrete troubles and necessities, and not through other occupation vain of each moment struggles of the fellow human. This

relations with God the certitude that he has inside a eternal value, sees the same value to his fellow human being. T. Steinbüchel (Der Umbruch des Denkens, Regensburg, 1936, p. 122) commenting the mentioned maxim and another one from the p. 146 of F. Ebner, says: „Sie lässt ihn im Du des anderen a in „Ewiges“ zeichen. Eben wilde das Ich im Gottes ewigen Du seine „geistige Grundlage“ ha, darum auch das Du des anderen, der Mensch ist wie das Ich“.

³³ THEODORE STEINBÖCHEL, der Umbruch des Denkens, p. 97: “in der lebendig vollzogenen Beziehung zu seinem Du ist der Mensch erst Persönlichkeit und also das, was er wirklich ist“.

means that I have to participate like a factor to history, by getting aware seriously about its problems. This is for, if I do not help my fellow human with my deed, I won't show strength of faith and I couldn't make the other to believe. This shows that I cannot break myself away, in my conscience, from the concrete content of the instant and of the place. I am compelled to serve through all my being to the necessities put there by my fellow human here and now. I cannot deny serving service this man in this instant, by being myself satisfied with the theoretical love of the people, with the philosophy on my duty towards them³⁴.

I have highlighted that not in my exploitation of my fellow human it stays the report of the true communion, of the true validation of the subjects like *me-you* - but, again, it neither stays into a rejection of his concrete claim for help. I can pretend to my fellow human to ask me only for a platonic understanding, a communion which is missing from both parts the sharing of concrete hardships and the request for help. The man is not somewhere beyond all this, but into them. I will wake up the one who completes my being into my fellow human, if I do not avoid: to wash the wound of his body when he is ill; to help him earning a piece of bread when he is in need; to visit him and walk next to him when he is blasphemed by everybody. Of course, these are not that intimacy of the human being that I want to create, neither this works taken per se are not the ones which wake up his communion subject, but the faith and the love put in

³⁴ TH. STEINBÖCHEL, das Umbruch und Denkens: "Dem wirklichen Du begegnet das wirkliche Ich nur in der wirklichen geschichtlichen Situation und diese ist eine solche immer in gerichtlicher Gemeinschaft des bereutes und Standes des Volkes und Staates. In alle diese Gemeinschaftsbezüge ist der konkrete Mensch verflochten und der Ausspruch des Du an das Ich ist ein Immer ein solcher des Du in **der Not**, in der **es hier** steht, an das Ich, das **hier** vor Du Ich wird.", (p.173).

them. Therefore it is necessary that love to be shown in concrete manifestations, in answering the fellow human needs.

The man, though, does not appear to us like an individual totally detached from any bonds with others. He is a part from a society and the hardships, the joys, and all his problems, they are caused by this society, which has in every moment its content of concrete preoccupations. The understanding of the human being, helping him, it must to envisage, at least indirectly, the whole society, with its rules from that time. I see me in the situation to plead for the establishing of some organizing conditions for the collectivity of a given time. Here's how the quality of the propagator of the Revelation into the history compels you to be a history factor. The prophets addressed themselves not only to individual persons, but to the entire society, asking it to leave some mores and shapes which were suffocating the true soul of the human being, and his power to raises up to the light through faith and communion.

It was noticed that Jesus Christ did not play a public role from a position of a society leader. Such a role, by taking you out from the direct communion with your fellow humans and by forcing you to put between you and them the generalizing and indifferent law to their states and necessities which are different and intimate to each of them, it is not appropriate for bringing to light the other's subject into the me-to report, for the spiritual birth of the people. Despite all of this, Jesus Christ addressed Himself not only to one person at a time, but also to the crowd, and also even to whom weren't present and not only in the words of *me-you* restricted report, but also in severe formulations of general nature, insisting on a change of mores and social reports. But the raise to a general language and to a preoccupation that widens all over

the society, is neither to the prophets or to Jesus Christ and must not be at any human being who wants to be a link in propagating of the Revelation, a raising into the sphere of the abstract, where the concrete face of the human being fades to become a number into the crowd to which is applied the harsh and indifferent law. Not with the laws per se, detached from the living and intimate report between people occupies the human being who propagates the faith, but he has continuously in view these reports. His general speaking is not but a widening of the speech towards his concrete fellow human, not aiming something else then to see everywhere such a report established between people. The intimate reports, which give birth to the souls, are the ones concerning the man in the position of propagating the faith, and not the juridical expression of these reports, which remains sometimes an empty shape.

In the newer Protestant theology we encounter various judgments on history, but all of them have a unilateral character.

Fr. Gogarten³⁵ sustains that only into the *me-you* report stays the living reality of the history and the creation in the same time. Responding to the appeal of the fellow human, experienced in the second person, we continue the history and, in the same time, the creation. The history, in its living core, it is an unaltered continuation of the creation. In other's pretension, in my limitation through him, in his presence, I'm experiencing that the world is not an own product, but it is a creation of God, and in this encounter and in the working under its commandment it stays the history too. When I raise myself from the *me-you* report and I am working under the impulse of a principle produced by my mind, I'm no longer into the history, neither into the unaltered reality of the

³⁵ Ich glaube an den dreieinigen Gott, Jena, 1926.

creation, but I'm into a illusory world, which is built by me. The Revelation propagates therefore only through the intimate report between *me* and *you*, because this represents the history and the creation untouched by sin, like it emerged from the hand of God. E. Grisebach argues the same idea on philosophical plan. After him, we do not have the reality but only into *me* and *you* meeting, named by Grisebach as present. All the constructions of the thinking, of the studying, and of the deed, into the situation of not-meeting, are individualistic and from dream's world; they are getting out the human being from the present and from his needs, locking him up into a meditation on what it was, namely upon the past.

Emil Brunner³⁶ thinks that into the content of the human life there exist reports and rules which, being absolutely necessary to this life, they are not products of the sin, but they essentially depend on creation: are "creational rules" (Schöpfungsordnungen). Like all the Reformed, also Brunner inclines towards a pessimistic judgment of human life in history, but however he thinks the historical system of rules - in frame of which the human deeds took place - it has some neutral parts under moral report. This character it had, for instance, by the reports: young-old, child-parent, leader-led, and some of fundamental economical laws of life. The state is also a creational order, but it is affected in some measure by sin. What all "creational rules" have in common is that through them is being expresses the bond with the fellow human, and your obligation towards him. Into the depths of our historical life there are certain clean "creational rules", but, more at the surface, the

³⁶ Das Gebot und die Ordnungen, 1932.

action of the sin raises up less pure constructions, like it is the State, for example.

Brunner is close to Gogarten and Grisebach by the fact that he sees the life free of sin and the reality of the creational order and of the real history into the man to man communion, in the reciprocal spirit of love and in reciprocal serving. But he differs from those ones, because he thinks that in communion reports we do not meet like realities stripped away by all epithets, or by any social determination, like *me* and *you* per se. A father remains in his report with his child forever determined by the his conscience of being father and, at his turn, the son cannot get out in his encounter with the father, no matter how intimate would it be, from the epithet of being the sun. Unlike the pessimistic judgment which Gogarten and Griesenbach said, Brunner argues that, by being determined by creation, these epithets and these social report are not sinner per se, though almost never the man updates them in a sinless manner, because neither of the two accomplishes in his pure form the father or the son. However, not only in the sphere of eventual meetings between *me* and *you* - like realities which stand beyond any social epithet - there is absent the sin, but also in the region of meetings between *me* and *you* like realities qualified and structured through creation.

A totally opposed opinion both to Gogarten and to Brunner, it showed H. Thielicke. He expressed in the most rigorous manner the Reformed conception, brought back to life by Karl Barth, according to which there cannot be distinguished anything good in history, not even a remaining rest from the creation's order, from the structure of world like it emerged from God's hand. The whole history is carried on by the wish of selfish affirmation (*Selbstseinwollen*). No *you* can ask me within the history's frame, for something that contradicts my will of affirmation; likewise, no one

can ask me – in the frame of the history – for something while still remaining disinterested and undisturbed by his selfish will. *Me* and *you* cannot meet together directly, but only through the environment of the history, organized in “organizational rules”, which are not pretending and are not permitting an unconditioned oblivion of the self in front of the fellow human, but they require only a conditioned can ask me – in the frame of the history – for something while still remaining disinterested and undisturbed by his selfish will. *Me* and *you* cannot meet together directly, but only through the environment of the history, organized in “organizational rules”, which are not pretending and are not permitting an unconditioned oblivion of the self in front of the fellow human, but they require only a conditioned consideration, having only a role of restraining and regulating our selfish will, which otherwise will conduct to chaos³⁷. But Thielicke knows about a vertical history too - unlike of this history fallen on all the line called by him as horizontal. This consists in the man’s hearing of God’s pretensions of unconditioned love for the fellow human, for totally forget about the self. But these unconditioned commandments cannot be fulfilled by the human being. These commandments have no other effect but to unveil to the man the misery of his historical condition, and his identity with

³⁷ HELMUTH THIELICKE, *Gesichte und Existenz*, 1935, p. 124-125. „Wie kann man also davon sprechen dass es in der realen, d.h. unmittelbaren Begegnung mit dem Du und seinen unbedingten Anspruch die Erkenntnis der Schöpfungsordnungen“ möglich sei, wo jene Begegnung selber schon getrübt und in ihrer Unmittelbarkeit gehemmt ist durch die „Schöpfungordnung“, in deren Rahmen jene Begegnung sich doch bereits vollzog“. „Die „Schöpfungsordnungen“immer Strukturelemente unserer gefallenen Geschichtswirklichkeit sind“.

the irremediable sinful of the whole historical structure, and to make the man waiting for the salvation - exclusively from God's mercy - into another realm of existence³⁸, whereas the divine pretention asks us for entering the unconditioned connection with our fellow human, with the overcoming of the historical structure based on own will to affirm ourselves, and this thing we cannot fulfill it, so that the fellow human remains to us as a continuously inaccessible reality. In fact, we cannot meet him and it only remains to us to believe in his existence like "*you*". "It is not possible, in the space of the history, a sight of the neighbor. It continuously remains that space between us and in the front of the faith, like an unseen wall which stops us from seeing the fellow human in what he is characteristic... and in this respect, therefore, we are moving through faith and not through sight, within history, and not in the immediacy of the neighbor. "The neighbor" is, strictly said, a concept and an eschatological purpose, like also the unconditioned pretention bears an eschatological character due to its non-conditionality" (p. 140).

³⁸ "Das Du des Anderen – wie es mir im profanen Soil gezielt ist – also immer nur das Du, das im Rahmen der Eigengesetzlichkeiten erscheint und durch sie bedingt ist... Ich bin ihm nur so Welt verpflichtet, als es die Gesetzmäßigkeit des geschichtlichen Lebens zulässt. Das bedingte Maß aber, in dem ich ihm verpflichtet bin, ist nun zugleich das Maß dafür, inwieweit es für mich „Du“ ist.“ p. 136 – 7. „Sein überdüngrter Anspruch, den er im Namen des geoffenbarten Gottes, des Schöpfers, stellt, fordert von mir das Heraustreten aus meiner Geschichtlichkeit zur unbedingten Liebe und Hingabe. Gleichzeitig aber zwingt et mich – um der Unerfüllbarkeit dieser Forderung willen – mich mit der Geschichte zu identifizieren, die zu mir jene unbedingte Hingabe verwehrt und minder mich immer bei sich, d. H. Bei meiner Geschichtlichkeit, festhält.“ P. 139.

The history is sinful in its entirety and, as there is no possible escape from it, likewise there is no possible raising to that deed which to be clean of sin. Through faith, we know about another realities plan, but the faith, instead of helping us to get closer to that plan, it rather shows us that we are nailed on the wall of moral helplessness, and that we are merged into the structure of history: namely of the sin.

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In what it regards both Gogarten and Brunner, we have no doubt that they considered the history like a frame which the Revelation can propagate within. But, either the thesis of Thielicke, as pessimistic as it would seem to us, does not take away from the history this character of it. It is true that he noticed the divine signals descending into the souls like vertical history, but this bright certainties get ignited into the people who live into the history, and they accompany the people in their historical life, even if they have no efficiency on their deed in history. Even if it isn't influenced by the permanent descending or the perpetuation of the Revelation in it, the history it is however the necessary environment in which, in the present conditions, the Revelations it is made known to the people. Not any man who participates to the horizontal history is imparts with the Revelation, but, besides this participation, it is impossible to somebody to reach the Revelation.

But the opinion of Thielicke, after which all the reports into the history are, under the moral-religious aspect, equal and in all of them is manifested, organized, and restricted, the selfish impulse, it cannot be sustained by the Christian point of view. It would be enough to challenge ourselves to Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God living the eternal life. If the historicity

had meant sinfulness, the Son of God would have had also Him a sinful earthly existence.

The weakness of the thesis it can be unveiled through more concrete illustrations too. Into the different rules which regulate the human life, like are the family, the state, the school, and the economical reports, just in the edges established by laws and by public opinion there exists a big elasticity in the way the people fulfill and can fulfill their duties. If the single factor which moves in the frame permitted by them, it was the selfish will to affirm the self, we would not encounter the great variety of moral order into the way of human deed within these rules and systems. And this variety results from the scrupulosity more or less accentuated, which the members of these rules understand with - under the pressure of the faith in God, most of the time - to behave within its frame, a scrupulosity which is not often deprived by the minimum requested by the law. From where it comes this scrupulosity, if the single thing which the historical man had been structurally preoccupied with, it would have been the selfish will to affirm itself? The commercial agents know that they are justified through laws to compete with others and their competition can destroy those ones. But among them there are some who refrain themselves from use all the competition that the law allows. Beyond their interests and beyond the law, they see the soul of the another, and they search for communion. A judge or a state's clerk can watch impassibly how a citizen is struck by the law that they apply. But they can show also understanding, can they can share some tears from him, and they can lighten into this official frame the light of the self which search for and wake up into another person the soul which he enters the communion with. Thus, it can be set like a conclusion, the question: why some people compel themselves and succeed to correctly fulfill these duties, and they

even exceed the correctness, if the correctness equals incorrectness in history, and if the law which it regulates the selfishness – the only factor of the history – it can be cheated sometimes? How it is applied the possibility of the deed to be variable, under the pressure of the conscience?

From where comes then the tendency of the human being to exceed the minimum requested by the social rules and by laws, and to search for the soul of the fellow human? One cannot say that this search and encounter it stays on the same level, under the moral aspect, with the legal fulfillment of the duties towards them. The evidences are too powerful. The man's striving on this direction it may seem absurd. But, one cannot say, also, that through such raisings over what the law imposes into a social rule, it would that rule be abolished, so that such raisings would be dangerous. Not all the people can raise and not permanently. And if all of them can raise above the level required by these rules, these raisings would not be necessities for the historical life.

The history is not a uniform entity, under moral aspect, to be equally sinful in all its sectors and manifestations. Its permanent and fundamental rules are a minimum frame to maintain the people in reciprocal reports and conditionings and, therefore, the rules are superior to chaos. But they are not only brakes for the selfishness, or forms of the selfish transactional reports, but they can be and they are, in the majority of the cases, more or less ladders on which the human being climbs from selfishness to searching for the soul of the fellow human. It exists in the deep of the human being, dormant, a longing for the soul of the neighbor, a longing for the communion with him. But this longing cannot be awakened up and it cannot be satisfied except by the passing of the human being through the frame of the fundamental

reports established in “creational rules”. The human being cannot reach the report with his fellow human except by following frames of the “creational rules”, in order to raise towards the highest steps or even to get out of them. These are not only for keeping us on the spot, or to retain us from the chaos of the selfish impulses, but they are also for educating us and for leading us towards the goal of the true communion. By the fact that somebody is a father, he is not retained only from the selfishness to the fellow humans who are his children, but he is also educated how to really become the most loving soul towards them. But who does not reach there, he remains sustained by these rules in order not to fall in chaos. Because there is no human being who can live, permanently, in pure communion with each of its fellow humans.

Are these rules sinful, or are they produced by the concern of God after the man's falling into sin, in order to retain him from chaos? If they are sinful and produced by the falling into sin, the history, which is constituted by them, it is also opposed to the creation and, so, it is structurally sinful.

If the pure communion between *me* and *you*, it is the perfection, out of the fact that Adam and Eva didn't stay into a communion stripped by all social epithets, we deduce that they weren't put at the edge of the perfection, but on the way towards it. Adam was a man, Eva was a woman, and the report between them was one of husband and wife. They were not sinful. They were kind, but not consolidated into god. This rule is truly creational, and in it is implicitly given all other permanent rules of the human life prolonged into history. They are not occasioned by sin and we do not have, so, any motif to radically separate between the order of the creation and the order of the history.

They weren't given, from the beginning, like barriers against the sin, but like helps towards perfection. Only after that they received this function. Of course that

within history it happens in some places and times that these rules cannot be considered like ascents towards the meeting between *me* and *you*, towards the raising up of the human being to the forgetfulness of the self, to the selfless serving of the fellow human; it may happen that some people and some social groups reduce the whole history to the more or less correct fulfillment of the legal duties or of these rules, because of not seeing beyond history nothing as depending on the being of the history and on their purpose.

But the history, usually, it cannot last reduced only to these rules took as such, or like simple brakes against the selfish passions. History like a whole, it desperately needs the striving towards the search of the fellow human through the faith in God, towards the unselfish communion. This is the history's salt, without which the history rots and it collapses in chaos. Without the communion report between people, which to be activated through the propagation of the faith from one to another, even the basic rules of the history become impossible to be observed. This is because these ascensions into the sphere of the communion between people, they shakes the history up. The history's rules system, like the whole history's life too, it's like a mountain's vein which the gold lode of communion prolongs itself within, by being established between man and man, through the propagation of the faith. It is the big river which carries continuously the string of ships loaded with the divine Revelation's burden of gold.

The history's role is to be the environment which the Revelation propagates within. Not the history itself it produces the Revelation, neither the history propagates the Revelation by itself. But the history forms the substrate in which it descend and in which it prolongs the fire from above.

The reports between people within the frame of the

historical rules they don't determine - by themselves - the faith to propagate from human being to human being. When into the core of these reports there is not a communication of the faith too, they decay and the history become chaos. A father, whose report with his son it is not passed through by the arch of the faith too, he cannot be father at height; a merchant who, even into his commercial function, he does not let himself mastered also by the conscience of his responsibility for himself and for his soul, and for his fellow human's soul, he becomes to be a diluting factor of the society.

The faith's transmission moments coincide to the moment of culminant encounter between *me* and *you*, in what these subjects have as more intimate, and as more proper. That's why, in order to raise up to the receiving of the faith, you have to raise yourselves up towards communion, and towards the discovery of the self and of the soul of the fellow human. But you cannot produce the faith by yourself, no matter how hard you force yourself to reach the consummate communion, neither can you produce by yourself the perfect communion. It is here also God into the work. In any case, though, the peak of the faith is one with the communion. And you cannot reach it except within the frame of the social rules' reports, even if you urge yourself too, in order to surpass the legal minimum of these reports, and to search for your fellow human's soul, or even if the faith of your fellow human with whom you are in such reports, it snatches you from the beginning. The conveying power of the faith is conditioned, at least to the one from whom it is done the conveying, by the moral raising up over the minimum asked by the law of his social quality. A father won't not transmit his faith to his son if he isn't regarded by his son as being a good father. A merchant won't be able to convey the faith to his clients if he doesn't become an honest merchant. Not the goodness

of the father neither the honesty of the merchant make to raise the faith within the soul of the son or of the client, but their certitude. But the certitude is not felt like a reality where is not together with it also a great moral height into the frame of the reports upheld by the creational rules. Behold, therefore, how these rules are not only frames, but they are also an auxiliary of faith transmission. Far from being there any opposition between these reports - which qualify the subjects in a way or another - and the communion report, when these ones meet together in their pure intimacy and they transmit their faith, the first ones collaborate to producing the last ones.

On this way, the history seems to us placed into a positive light - without idolizing it like a reality sufficient to itself. It has the mission of a bosom, in which descends and through it is being transmitted the Revelation. There is no incompatibility between history and Revelation, neither is there an identity. History does not save, but we can save ourselves within history's frame. Who compels himself in the history's frame, to conscientiously fulfill his legal duties, by being a good father, or a honest merchant, or a worthy clerk, without being him saved by this fact alone, he doesn't commits anything wrong but, a contrary, he is a good instrument to preach God.

In history we can fulfill the law, even the superior law of the love, of searching for the soul of the fellow human, without this itself to save us³⁹. Only Christ

³⁹ See Dosoftei's Confession: "If the man can make the good by nature, it was told covered by God, telling us that also the pagans love whom loves them. From here follows also that it is impossible that any good that man do can be a sin... The good it is impossible to be bad. The deed fulfilled only with the natural power and which doesn't make the man but psychic, not also spiritual, doesn't contribute to the saving, lacking the faith, but neither to the condemnation". Kimmel, I. 447.

saves, but the fulfillment of the law is not worthless and it prepares the soul for receiving Him. And this is when the law and the history are not judged like a closed system, like a final one, but they are reckoned as ones open into the waiting for the One Who gives them their true meaning. And when the faith has dwelt into the human being, this one must be raised to a moral height in the frame of his historical rule, otherwise it is a sign that God does not work in him and that He does not save him.

The reforms and the progresses of the history have, consequently, the meaning that they make the reports between human beings more and more righteous, and more appropriate in order the Revelation to descend within them and to be conveyed by them.

Not all the historical rules are of the same quality. The family's rules allow the most intimate report, but also the other rules are necessary for the social order which makes the rules and the more intimate reports as possible. Not only the substance of the brain, though it directly works the cogitation, it is necessary, but also the environment, and usually there is necessary the thicker shell of the body too. Not only the family but also the friendship is necessary, both of them like rules of the most intimate reports between human beings; and there is necessary also the state which assures the peaceful existence of the family and the commercial reports which ease the hardships of providing for the human beings.

Who reaches a steadfast and hard like a rock faith, he can get rid of certain historical rules, but until there he must cross through them. Eloquent in this sense it is the fact that Jesus tells after He began His mission: "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?", "The ones who follow Me". But until then He also had a mother around whom He grew up. He asks the apostles for leaving their parents too. But until that moment He also had parents. They cannot get out, generally, from

the historical reports with humans, but they have the duty to transmit the faith to others.

On this way, besides the final target at which it is destined to reach and about which we are going to speak in another place, the history fulfills on each moment his meaning, because, at any time a human being would live, he can be imparted with faith propagated through the history and, when dying, he can be saved. Besides these, within history there is fulfilled also a unitary meaning, whereas, in its frame, it is accomplished, through the propagation of the faith, the solidarity amongst people, whose deep and seriousness it consist into the fact that it is a solidarity based on each one's gratitude to his forerunners and on the responsibility towards successors in what concerns the eternal life. History makes us responsible towards others for eternity and this forces us to take care of the successors by conveying them the faith. The history cannot be attributed a more serious or a graver meaning than that of uniting the whole mankind forever and ever, on the grounds of the responsibility. The ones from the end of the world, whereas one does not know the end, they manifest also a certain attitude towards the successors, if they are conscious. But, especially, they manifest their solidarity or their carelessness towards their ancestors by keeping the faith.

From this one appears clearly the role of the tradition. No one receives the faith from God on an isolated way, through vertical history - like Thielicke would say -, but God or the vertical history meet him through the horizontal history. Every sect headman owns his belief to the community from which he has emerged, or, in a final analyze, to the Apostolic Church.

This importance of the history like a whole, instead of diminishing the importance of each moment and of each human face, it amplifies it in an overwhelming

way. Not only that every human being, no matter when he or she lived, they can be saved, they can realize themselves like a fully *me* through communion and faith, but they have a major influence over the salvation or the loss of the future generations.

All these show from which depths of wisdom it was produced the Descent of Son of God within history, in order to work, from it and through it, to the mankind salvation in its solidarity, for He wasn't satisfied with working from the sky, not incarnated, upon each human being taken individually. God does not want the individualism of the monads, in a Protestant sense, but he wants historical solidarity. Otherwise, the history would not have any meaning. It would be completely devalued. The Church, also, it would have been impossible, if there hadn't existed except a personal report between the individual and God. What sense will make in this case, even the sparks lightened by God in each soul individually, if they have no effect upon the historical life of the human being, except of showing him the impossibility of any effect? The human being would be imparted with this Revelation only in the future life, when it takes place - into a Protestant conception - the actual salvation.

THE FIRST PART

THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

II. THE FULL REVELATION OF GOD IN JESUS CHRIST

II. 1. The Apostles – the First People Who Experienced the Full Revelation of God

Searching for the origin of our faith in one of its coordinates, namely in the horizontal one, we have seen that on the uniform road we arrive to the prophets, namely to those people who know that they do not received the certitude of the faith from their ancestors and, however, they have it. The positive experiences, clear and indubitable, are added to confirm them the surety that their certitudes come from God.

By analyzing, however, our faith, we find that it comprises elements for which the prophetic origin is not sufficient. The faith of the prophets it consisted only in the certitude about God's existence and of some commandments which He communicated to people, through prophets. The prophets confessed about a God who remains at distance from people, making His will known through intermediaries and setting the law like a sign of a link with them, from distance. The prophets knew themselves like intermediaries of the law, they asked for the fulfillment of the law, and they put the man in report with God through the law - namely they sustained a report which, in the same time, it is a distance.

But we ascertain that the most important special element, of our faith, about what the prophets taught us, it is the certitude about God being in the full proximity to us, in the person of Jesus Christ, on Whom we have the certitude that He is God Himself. And, by following the history's thread, we see that the apostles were the ones who had this certitude, and

they have conveyed it to us, through the generations which preceded us.

The apostles have an identical meaning with the prophets, because they were the people who learned about God not through the mediation of ancient fellow humans, but they stood directly in front of Him, and they received directly from Him this certitude and the messages which they had to convey.

Unlike the prophets, however, the apostles experienced God not in His supra-historical transcendence, but in a historical man into whom they knew God, the One descended in a consummate vicinity of the world, and Who gave the apostles a more complete Revelation.

The apostles are those men that, in the presence of a Man Who they met, they experienced that He was the embodied God. They met a Man like never was met before in the whole history, Who created in them the certitude that He is God. This man did not seem to them, like everyone who receives the faith through another, like ordinary people do, or directly from God, like the prophets did, but He was Himself the source of the faith and He manifested the unshaken certitude that He is God. Moreover, not only He had this certitude, but it was born also in the ones who stood around Him. The apostles met in Him the ultimate reality, from which they didn't feel the need to walk further in order to prop their being and their faith.

In general, the faith, that meant the belief and the certitude of the divine reality, like something beyond the personal self and beyond the immanent world, it cannot be produced either by the immanent world of nature or by historical persons. This negative fact we all of us are experiencing it. The faith can be caused only by the divide reality itself. The historical persons they can only occasion us the faith. That's why, when they occasion us the faith, the ones who receive the

faith through them, though they have an experience of the divine reality, they realize that the reality is beyond the causing persons. The experience of the faith, distinguishes all the time between the instrument which causes it, and God, like its object or ultimate and true Source. The faith feels when it has met God.

Jesus Christ, though, He was not to the apostles only a person who occasioned them the faith in God, but he was God himself. If the faith is the conscious certitude about the reality of God, being produced only by the encounter, in a certain way, with this reality, the reality of God won't unveil itself in a deceptive way. If there hadn't been the own reality of the Person of Jesus Christ, there would not have been experienced by the apostles, like being one with that Person, but only as caused by it, like in other cases it happens all the time.

Through what thing, the apostles sensed that Jesus is not only a man, like they all were, but, He was in the same time, God? Through what the experience which they had in front of Jesus, different from the experience they had in relation with another people?

Who can put in words these characteristics of their experience in front of God, and the reason of their certitude about His divinity? They, though, were able to expose their experience in Gospels, so that Jesus from Gospels actually reveals Himself as being God. And it is certain that they were capable to transmit this experience of them, also in preaching from person to person.

Fr. Gogarten has highlighted a lot, the word spoken by Jesus Christ, like a revelator factor of His Godhead. By the fact that Jesus was a historical Person, Who spoke from outside, He proved His objective reality, not as produced by man. But, if He had seemed like any other man, He would not have established the faith in Him like God. This historical contingency would

have not been, in the same time, the Absolute in the ones from around Him, in order them to feel that they can lean themselves onto Him, like on the ultimate reality.

God is a trans-subjective and absolute reality. Through His appearance like an exterior *you* He exposed without any doubt His trans-subjectivity, His reality different from *me* and, in the same time, He got out from the infinite abyss onto the plan accessible to us. He must show, though, His absoluteness too. Through embodiment, through the step onto the ontological plan accessible to us, like a *you* of the communion, God didn't renounce to his infinity and absoluteness. This *You* which welcomed the apostles from Jesus Christ, was experienced by them, actually, like absolute, through the word, but also through His living and His deeds. That's for, between the word and the acts of somebody, there is a tight correspondence. Through what experienced the apostle His word like absolute, like from an absolute Person?

The word of the fellow human has two reasons:

a. to address us a calling of love, to getting out from selfishness and to recognizing him like a reality equal to us, in order to enter the communion, and

b. to answer such of calling or to fulfill our calling.

The word of any man does not fulfill these two functions but relatively. It is not able to determine us to decide for a categorical answer, a total one, to decidedly get out from our self, to let go all our things and to be at his disposition; or, if not, to categorically declare us as enemy of him. Any man's words have not but a relative echo within us. The word of Jesus had upon His contemporaries this absolute power in a positive or negative sense. Namely, His word wasn't addressed only like the pretense of somebody who does not claim but the appreciation owed to his equal, only

the proper love for his fellow human, but, from Him it sounded besides this – besides humbleness from man – the absolute pretention of the supreme Master to be followed, to renounce to all our things for Him. And in this respect too, Jesus was reveal like complete man and complete God, like humbleness and sovereignty met without neutralizing each-other. Not humble like a man and master like a God, but the same subject also humble and sovereign, or humble into sovereignty and sovereign into humbleness, God leaned down to the height of the man and the man raised to the height of God.

But, also through the second function of His word, Jesus was showing Himself like the incorporation of the absolute. From His word was radiate the perfect love and, precisely through this, His call sounded with categorical authority.

Through His life and deeds too, He fulfilled all our pretentions, all our needs for the love of the fellow human. He fulfilled it to the end, by receiving for us the death on the cross; and through His sacrifice, which is the fulfillment of our pretense, it was manifested in the most overwhelming way the claiming power of Jesus upon us. In His passion and crucifixion it is fulfilled His word of love, it is completely satisfied our need for the other's love, namely what His word confesses too. In His wonders but especially in His Resurrection it is revealed also the sovereign power itself, that is manifested through His word. His deeds are absolute in the manifestation of love and power, like the resonance of His word it is absolute too.

In Jesus, "the fulfilled word" welcomes us, like it said Fr. Gogarten⁴⁰. Jesus does not only utter the word, but He is identified to it, He is the Word itself, by being One with the communion maker character of the

⁴⁰ Ich Glaube an den dreieinigen Gott, p. 152-3 : „ das erfüllt Wort ".

word. His being is not fallen from the height of the word to the state of selfishness. He is the wholly human word and the wholly godlike word. There is a close connection between these. The wholly human word cannot exist, except only in connection with the absolute word, namely the godlike one.

In front of Jesus the people experienced not only His Godhead, but also their sin. Actually, these two experiences are close clasped together.

But, as in general, the faith in God, the one which a man receives it from his fellow human – eventually from the prophets –, he does not receive it entirely from that human being, but also from God, likewise the faith in Jesus Christ, which we receive it from our forerunners and, in the last analyze from the apostles, we receive it in the same time also from Jesus Christ through some direct presence of Him. God-Man, Who was the historical person of Jesus Christ, He is alive forever and ever through His ascension to heaven. The power of Jesus to raise us through word and deed it shows its absolute and godlike intensity, also by the fact that any word spoken or any deed done by somebody in His name, with faith, it awakes us with the same force like the word or the deed of Jesus Himself. In the word spoken by a human to *you*, like a confession into Christ, Jesus Himself reveals Himself to us, and He speaks to us like that sovereign You⁴¹. As He promised, Jesus is with those who preach Him, until the end of the ages.

The apostles were put in the state of preaching of Jesus Christ only after His ascension to heaven, namely after the fulfillment of all the acts that were revealing for His Godhead, producing into souls this certitude. They had personally needed this ultimate

⁴¹ FR. GOGARTEN, w. c. p. 167.

manifestation of His Godhead, but this was also a condition for the birth of faith into the listeners. Only after the man Jesus, Who lived on earth among people, in humbleness, and Who ended on cross, He ascended to heaven, at the world leadership, His Godhead imposed like the supreme certitude's fact. For that the Holy Ghost has been sent on earth and He works on the birth of faith only after the Lord's ascension to heavens. Between the evidence produced by Jesus through objective revelation, of His complete Godhead, and the subjective work of the Holy Ghost, there is a close connection, being a proof that the work of the Holy Ghost regarding its effects it goes parallel to the evidences, not against them.

Thus, by the fact that God descended into history and lived among people, speaking the words to their hearing, and making in their sight the godlike deeds, the ones proven to us by people, through preaching and writing, we have the possibility to look ourselves and to convince ourselves, also in an unmediated mode, by His Godhead. The godlike Person of Jesus, is revealed from the narrations of the apostles like an independent reality in whole its majestic and conquering power.

And through the ascent to heaven, Jesus Christ does not cease to be close to us, and to exercise a direct efficiency upon us. Being God, fact which the ascension to heaven gives us a last assurance about, He is present everywhere, so also close to us. Thus, us too, even we are living long time after His time on earth, we are near to Him, and His face, which is revealed by the narrations of the apostles and of all our ancestors as a reality, we know that is alive and it maintains with us the communion which He has searched for it by making Himself man. Our gaze passes continuously from the memory of Jesus from History to His actual presence from Heavens. Only because He was present in history like a real man, we

can see Him in heavens with our faith, and only because He is in heavens, into the divine glory, His face in history confirms the abyssal traits of Godhead.

Historicity and supra-historicity, historic-human contingency and godlike absoluteness, the showing in a finite form of a human person in time and space and the supra-spatial, and supra-temporal infinity, do not abolish each - other, but they harmonize each - other, giving us the whole Revelation of God.

If He had remained only into His supra-historical infinity and absoluteness, God would have not wholly revealed Himself. We would have remained into a permanent equivoque whether the ideas which we have about God are not simple products of our subjectivity. By appearing in history like a *you* exterior to everyone of us, we can meet Him into a concrete face, which defends against any subjectivity. But if this historical face had been only a temporal and finite one, and hadn't comprise in it the godlike infinity, and it didn't lasted forever and ever, above time, then God wouldn't have came close to us and He wouldn't have became accessible to us, like One who wouldn't have fulfilled His Revelation.

God has made possible the live report with Him, which consist into our transcendence towards Him and into His intimate communication with us, only whereas He made Himself a man. The fundamental structure of the man consists, according to the philosopher Martin Heidegger, in "transcendence" understood like an act, like a continuous work of us, through which we are passing from us to the world, and, through this, from us from this moment, to us from the future moment, by raising us up from a state of living into the general clichés, to the conscience of our intimacy⁴².

⁴² "Vom Wesen des Grundes" in Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung, Husserl-Festschrift,

The conscience of the transcending, it receives another intensity when it is performed in God's direction and in a living and reciprocal report with Him. And God is experienced like a concrete and close reality, towards which we stay with all our being in tension, in Jesus Christ, in Whom God descended in the plan accessible to us.

II. 2. Jesus Christ – the True Transcendence

But let us insist a little more upon the idea of transcendence, brought into a practical light by the existentialist philosophy, but wholly realized only in the Christian living.

The big and definitive importance of the embodiment of Son of God, for human destiny, it will be highlighted even more.

We saw that the newer philosophy represents a turning back towards the objective reality. The second feature of it is the searching for an ultimate transcendence, and not for being known but because in its face and in live report with it the man accomplish himself in his fullness.

Century after century, the philosophy has been

Halle, 1929: „Transzendenz bedeutet Überstieg. Transzendent (transzendierend) ist, was den Überstieg vollzieht, im Überstiegen verweilt... Zum Überstiegen gehört dann solches, was unzutreffend meist das «Transzendenz» genannt ist... Die Transzendenz... meint solches, was den menschlichen Dasein gehört, und zwar nicht als eine unter anderen mögliche, zuweilen in Vollzug gesetzte Verhaltung geschehende Grundverfassung dieses Seienden... Im Überstieg kommt das Dasein allererst auf solches Seiendes zu, das es ist, aus es als es «selbst». Die Transzendenz konstituiert die Selbstheit... Wir nennen das, woraufhin das Dasein als transzendiert, die **Welt** und bestimmen **jetzt** die Transzendenz als **In-der-Welt-sein**“, pg. 80-82.

trying to answer the questions of the rationality, believing that on their resolving it hangs the clarification of world's mysteries and problems, and after some time in which exulted against reason, the vital impulse, the irrational, it lately wants to listen not only one part or another from the human being, but the man in his integral unity, like existence. Heidegger, Jaspers, Grisebach, the coryphaei of this philosophy, the want to decipher the human being in its fundamentals; the philosophy is a reflection upon the fundamental ontological categories of human being.

They are saying that the man like a whole, he will wake himself up at what is his own, intimate (zu seiner Eigentlichkeit), namely to the state of existence, which is also one of knowledge of what he is, only if he realizes about the boundary like a whole, by what it is beyond him, by his transcendence⁴³. Only when the man reports himself in his entirety to that transcendence, then he comes to his existence, at his own and ultimate living. When he reports himself to that transcendence only with his rationality, he remains into a numbed being, a hardened one, and without any interior resonance⁴⁴.

A border reality, a true transcendence for man it is only that which cannot be absorbed in his content or dominated by him, but it truly remains outside him, like a distress factor, like an opposition towards his

⁴³ **EWALD BURGER, Der lebendige Christus, Stuttgart 1933, p. 219 : „Die Frage nach der Existenz einhält die Frage nach der Transzendenz. Das ist das gemeinsame Kennzeichen aller Existenzphilosophie“.**

⁴⁴ KARL JASPERS, Philosophie, I. Bd.: Philosophische Weltorientierung, Berlin, 1932, p. 23: „Das eigentliche Sein, in einen Weißwaren Sinn nicht zu finden, ist in seiner Transzendenz zu suchen zu der kein Bewusstsein überhaupt, sondern nur jeweils Existenz in Bezug tritt“.

own being⁴⁵.

Such a reality it is for Heidegger, the nothingness in which passes us the death. When our being realizes that in his entirety it is destined to death, comes to the understanding of what really it is⁴⁶.

Grisebach argues the death is not a true transcendence, because it cannot be produced between our being and death a meeting like between two opposed realities. The man only thinks at death with anticipation. The death is the last point of our evolution, and the thought about it is a meditation

⁴⁵ On the importance of the border, of the transcendence, for the human life order, insist more also Hermann Herrigel in "Zwischen Frage und Antwort, Gedanken zur Kulturkrise", Berlin, 1930: "Die Grenze bezeichnet also nicht die wandelbare, sondern die unwandelbare Form, das letzte, Sicherste, selbstverständlichste". A real community without a commune border between those who are part of it isn't possible: "Gemeinschaft ist da, wo Menschen in einer gemeinsamen Wirklichkeit und einen gemeinsamen Horizont haben". But this border isn't put there by people, from inside the community, but from outside, from a transcendental. "Die selbst Gesetze Grenze, die von innen gesetzte Grenze ist streng genommen ein Widerspruch in sich selber... Wo das gemeinsame nur gesetzt ist, wo es auf Übereinkunft, auf einen Sozialkontrakt beruht, ist auch nur fiktive Gemeinschaft, Interessengemeinschaft... Die Grenze ist hier **von innen her** bestimmt, **aus** dem Willen der Einzelnen... Sie gehört also der Gruppe selber an und begrenzt sie **nach** außen. Wirkliche Gemeinschaft ist dagegen vorzustellen als eine Gruppe, die **von außen her**, aus dem Jenseits der Grenze, aus dem Absoluten her bestimmt ist und ihre Gestalt erhält. Die Grenze gehört nicht der Gruppe selber an, sondern wird von ihr verstanden als Offenbarung, als Verweichlichung des Absoluten", p. 27 - 31.

⁴⁶ **EWALD BURGER** (Der lebendige Christus, p. 219) interprets Heidegger's thought like this: „Die Ganzheit und die Eigentlichkeit des Daseins wird erst offenbar an seinen «Sein zum Tode»“.

from inside us on this natural end⁴⁷. Therefore the death does not raise us to the state of a true existence; it does not get us out from the closed circle of the self, it does not make us living into reality and like we actually are.

The experience of the transcendence it takes place, according Grisebach, only through the meeting face to face with another, with an *you*; only in this experience the self it is truly urged by a transcendence, it is obliged to decide itself and get out from the illusory and endless contents of his constructions.

Jaspers sees the encounter with the transcendence in every discontent of the self with his experiences' objectifications. The transcendence is experienced in communion with the another, it is accomplished when the self exceeds the fellow human objectification. But it is met in every contemplation and work, when the self feels the wreck of all objectified resultants of what succeeded to notice from reality⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ Gegenwart, 1928, p. 556-8: „Die Begegnung mit dem Tode ist daher keine Begegnung in Wirklichkeit, sondern eine ständig voreilende, bedachte Begegnung... Dieser Tod ist in der Gesamtentwicklung der Wesen ein gleichgültiger, verschwundener Punkt, denn er gilt ja für alle als Gesetz. Der Tod gehört zum Wesen, er ist eine Bestimmung des Wesen, aber er ist niemals ein Transzendenz, ein Anderes, das dem Wesen des Menschen von außen eine wirkliche Grenze setzt... Niemals kann man den eigenen Tod in Wirklichkeit erfahren. Er gibt uns keine Existenz“.

⁴⁸ **E. BURGER** (Der lebendige Christus, p. 219 – 220) told about Jaspers: „Wie bei Heidegger das letzte Wort das «sein im Scheitern». Das Scheitern ist die entschiedenste «Chiffre der Transzendenz». Mit der verhaltenen Leidenschaft des Existierenden drängt Jaspers immer wieder die Existenz an die Grenze der Transzendenz und währt zugleich jeder Vergegenständlichung der Transzendenz durch die Metaphysik“.

Jasper's philosophy has a religious breath, though the fear of objectification and of determination of what he considered as transcendence, it determined him to avoid any fixation of his experience into a religious doctrine⁴⁹.

The closeness of the existential philosophy to the Christendom, it shows in the general fact that also the Christendom claims the totality of the man. It is not addressing only to the mind or to the sentiment, but to entire human being. Repentance, faith, the new life, these are total states and attitudes of the man.

Moreover, we can tell that the tension manifested by the human cogitation into the existential philosophy for a transcendence, it is satisfied only in Christendom.

Only the Christendom accomplishes the full existence, because it is the only one putting the totality of the human being in a report with the true transcendence.

This transcendence, which cannot by any means be made a part of the conscience of the self, it is the person of Jesus Christ.

Heidegger, Grisebach, and Jaspers, they attempted to find the transcendence of the man, but nothing from what they are offering, as such, it is the true transcendence. The death, if it is considered like our being's passing into nothingness, it is not transcendence; the person of the fellow human is not a steadfast transcendence since he dies or we can reduce him to an object of our will. In general, we do not experience in him an ultimate given, a border that we cannot cross over, and a true force that urges us in an absolute way. The cherishing of the fellow humans, like a frontier to be respected, like a transcendence, it stays in proportional report with our

⁴⁹ **E. BURGER**, W. C.P. 221: "Jaspers Ausführungen sind, die aber bewusst zurückgehalten wird".

faith in God, and with the obligation in which God places us towards our fellow human. Grisebach asks us not to bring any aprioristic element in our encounter with our fellow human, or any principled attitude formulated before, in order to be able to act exclusively according to the necessity of the encounter moment. But on which authority he founds this urge? The experience of the fellow human does not presents like an ultimate base, a sufficient one, for such a behavior. Only if we bring the aprioristic element of the faith in God in this encounter with the fellow human, we will experience also him like a border.

This is the motif for which Jaspers searched for an actual transcendence, as an ultimate basis of everything: namely God. But the transcendence, what Jaspers searched for like, it can become easy a simple state of the inside, a certain subjective feeling.

Only the togetherness of the three realities, in which Heidegger, Grisebach, and Jaspers, they believed that they found the transcendence of existence, it truly comprises it.

It means that only when we encounter the absolute into a concrete person, then we experience the transcendence. And because we die, that historical person must show his absolute character also through that, for he reveals himself to us like a master over the region beyond death, by defeating death like somebody who stays on the throne of the supreme sovereignty. In this case death no longer appears to us like a natural end in nothingness, but rather like a gate which we cross ahead through, to an even more evident encounter with the person of Jesus Christ, our transcendence. Death is not transcendence through itself, but by the fact that beyond it, there waits for us the judge Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ hadn't resurrected Himself, and He hadn't ascended to

heavens, He wouldn't have been transcended into the life from here and we wouldn't have waited for Him to be either into the life from beyond. When we know Jesus as being alive, our life from here feels in Him the true border, the true and the scrutinizer judge, and death it is no longer an indifferent end to us, but the moment of inevitable confrontation with the judge who is waiting for us.

The true transcendence is not experienced by man either in any of his intellectual systems or in his artistic creations. Therefore, out of any of it, it does not detach the force which to set him into a state of frightened seriousness and responsibility; out of any of these, it does not arise to him the true self knowledge, like existence. With all his creations the man behaves in a playful spirit.

The vital reports with the fellow humans place the man into a state of much more seriousness. But he can easily descend even those, through his selfish attitude towards them. They cannot constitute a true border in the face of egotism, or an unshakable base of responsibility.

The fulfillment of the man into a life of true seriousness and self knowledge, of full living in what it is his own, it comes only from the faith in Jesus Christ, the only One in report with Whom the real transcendence is experienced. "The Christian preaching nevertheless it affirms that the transcendence, of which impossibility to be contained and of which non-objectivity (Unerlässlichkeit und Nichtgegenständlichkeit) the philosophers are defending it with so much passion, it is given into the Person of Jesus Christ, namely in the Scripture's word. In this contingent person, in this concrete word, one can find the transcendence"⁵⁰. Jaspers considered that the transcendence cannot be comprised into a person

⁵⁰ EWALD BURGER, W. c.p. 222.

and therefore the communion is not possible with it. One cannot find the transcendence into a person because the person is something that refers to something else: a person or a thing. Like a Person, God would need people for the communion with them. The transcendence would be restricted to a concrete entity. It is justified the answer of E. Burger, that the rationality of Christ it is just that in His transcendence it has been made accessible to us, to be experienced into a concrete unity.

Toward the passion of the existentialist philosophy, to surprise through those meeting, like through cipher, the infinity, E. Burger sustains that this philosophy does not succeed something else but to stay on the edge of the transcendence, and not to arrive to a communion with it. That's why, through it one cannot acquired a real existence, but he remains to the simple possibility. Only in relations with the concrete person of Jesus Christ, one can pass from the edge of the transcendence to the communion with the transcendence, from the tragic unrest into the possibility of the existence, to the reality of the existence, and from a hunch of the divine reality to experiencing it, and, through this, to the state of salvation⁵¹.

The philosophy argues that this reporting to a You, as Jesus Christ, it is not a reporting to the true transcendence, because it cannot be a diving into the infinity of God. One must search for God's infinity into the depths of the self or in the direction of endless deductions of the rationality. Searching for God into a *you*, even in Jesus Christ, it seems to "limit the God's infinity". E. Burger answers that "not the infinity is deeper that the personal character, but the personal character is deeper that the infinity". In fact, the so

⁵¹ W. c. p. 226.

called infinity to which the man arrives through himself, it is a product of his person. And "the man is fully human not in his inside, but in report with you". "The person is the true depth of the being"⁵².

The mentioned objections of the philosophy are explainable because it considers the transcendence, rightfully, also like an infinite source for the spiritual richness of the humanity and it seems to it that a person cannot accomplish such a condition. In fact, the true transcendence have only the role of making us to be penetrate by our intimacy through its quality as border which gives us a holy shiver, but it is also a source, the only source for our growth. But this positive quality can be held only by a person. The person alone, by the fact that claims us, he makes us getting out from ourselves, or exceeding ourselves, to enter the communion with it, and, through this, to try a true enrichment. From it to us it is established a communication of existence, without melting our individuality. The objects and the principles, they have not the power to make us getting out from our selfish prison. The human persons have some power⁵³, but not so much as the divine person has. And, by not getting out of ourselves, and by not entering the communication with the big wave of the reality, we cannot get richer.

So, the more categorical is the claiming which comes from outside, the more we find ourselves in the front of more intensive personality, and the more we can exceed us by entering a true contact with the big reality. The true transcendence is in the same time the supreme border and the endless source for us, for, as a reality it is more fully border to us, and it is also a

⁵² W. c.

⁵³ Louis Lavelle, *De l'Acte*, p. 519 : « L'amour... nous oblige à trouver dans les autres consciences... un moyen qui nous invite nous a dépasser nous même ».

source to us. But only the person has both the quality of being a border which resists any our will to comprise it, and to be also of a source which gives us power when we are in communion with it. Only the person gives us the experience of the reality from outside us, and also he gets us out from subjectivism, and he occasions us the enrichment through the contact with him. While, in the front of the object, only we are the active, the person is a factor which communicates its power.

The object is only a passive representation of me. And when it resists me, it unveils a limit of mine, but one which I can defeat or which I can move away indefinitely, as my force grows up. My loneliness is by no means annihilated in either cases. On this way, in front of objects, ideas, and laws, not being but me affirming myself, inside me, I can ask myself which is the value of this affirmation? I feel the need of a confirmation through somebody else, in order to have the surety of my real existence. My subjectivity must be objectified, without losing from its character. I feel the need to be affirmed by somebody, like I am affirming myself, through his liberty and spontaneity, to be thought, desired, and loved, and not to be a simple subjective dream. And it is remarkable that through the fact that I am affirmed by a human being, which has free will, as I do too, I do not lose from my character of subject, but only then I increase in experiencing my intimacy. So, through my affirmation by others, through their cogitation, will, and love, I earn a density and a profoundness of existence, like I cannot have otherwise. Only the experience of a person who cares about me and to whom I care of, it causes in me the development of all the endeavors to raising, and to perfecting myself for being worthy of his

⁵⁴ I have edited in this passage almost literally some admirable rows from Louis Lavelle, *De l'Acte*, p. 528 – 30: “On peut prétendre que j'ai besoin de l'objet qui me résiste et sur lequel je m'appuie pour me confirmer moi-même dans l'existence. Mais cet objet n'est d'abord pour moi qu'une représentation... Quand cet objet me résiste il me révèle une limite de mon action, mais que je puis indéfiniment reculer à mesure que ma force s'accroît. Ni dans l'un cas ni dans l'autre cas, ma solitude n'est rompue. Pourtant, si c'est par le dedans que je suis capable de m'affirmer moi-même ou si, en d'autres termes, il n'y a que moi qui puisse me poser, je puis me demander quelle est la valeur de cet acte même par lequel je m'affirme et je me pose moi-même. Suffit-il à m'inscrire dans le monde, à élever jusqu'à l'objectivité ma propre subjectivité ?... je possède en effet une existence qui, si elle n'est pas un rêve subjectif, doit pouvoir être affirmée, c'est-à-dire pensée, voulue, aimée, par autre conscience qui soit elle-même un foyer original de vie personnelle afin d'une part, de franchir moi-même les bornes de ma propre intimité subjective... et afin d'autre part, de pouvoir affirmer dans l'être ma subjectivité propre par la reconnaissance même dont elle est l'objet... Chose admirable, c'est à partir du moment où s'établissent des relations entre ma propre conscience et la conscience d'un autre que j'ai seulement le droit de prononcer le mot intimité, comme si je ne pouvais découvrir et prouver ma propre intimité que dans une intimité avec autrui. Si on peut considérer l'acte constitutif de notre vie spirituelle l'acte par lequel, nous détournons le spectacle du monde, nous découvrons notre subjectivité propre, on peut dire que son acte le plus émouvant et qui aussitôt lui donne une profondeur et un horizon sans limites, c'est l'acte par lequel nous reconnaissons que cette subjectivité elle-même retient l'attention et l'intérêt d'une autre conscience et acquiert ainsi tout à coup une signification universelle et ontologique qui la dépasse comme existant par un autre et à laquelle elle n'osait pas prétendre... Se sentir aimé, c'est sentir que l'on est voulu comme existant par un autre, c'est s'attribuer à soi-même une densité d'être qui était restée en doute jusque-là, ou que l'on avait pu se refuser à soi-même par humilité, c'est vouloir se montrer digne de cet amour dont on est l'objet, c'est craindre de n'être jamais à son niveau, c'est découvrir les puissances mêmes qui sont en soi et mettre tout son zèle à le exercer.”

But, if the simple human person is - more than any force of nature, or more than any principle - the quality of transcendence like border and like spiritual source to me, God, making Himself accessible to me through transcendence, He takes the most suitable form, namely that of a human person. All the human person has like secret power for confirming and stimulating my existence, it is used by God while revealing Himself to me, but, moreover, He adds to this power of human the person His infinity of authority and of divine reality, but in this form of the human person who creates the personality within me. God, by revealing Himself into a human person, He makes possible to me to enter and to persist into a living and concrete report with Him, a veridical experience of a reality from outside me, which I am communicating with, through continuous transcending from me and over me, and which I feel like a limit and like an absolute authority of me, but, in the same time, and right because of that, I feel it like the absolute support and like the source which gives my intimacy continuous growth and depth.

The person of an average man, through himself, no matter how much he has the feature to confirm us in existence, and to make us to grow up, we still feel him as limited in what he can give to us. On many occasions, we are turning back disappointed by the fact that we trusted him, as much as he is inferior under moral aspect. A human person in vicinity of whom one experiences the presence of the holiness, he attracts the people with a force which nothing from the splendors or mightiness of nature or of ideas can attract us with, and he occasions us the feeling of a true *mysterium tremendum*. In front of purity and moral steadiness, mixed with a divine presence, which the saint appear us with, the man, aware of his sinfulness, he continuously experiences a shiver of

metaphysical fear, yet this relation gives him the power to exceed himself. To the man who has experienced all kinds of nature's mightiness, of art, of culture, but he has also had this contact with a saint, it is so evident the feature of the saint to represent a much superior transcendence to all other objects and principles, so that he cannot explain the doubts of the others in this regard, but only through that that they haven't passed through the whole range of the experiences.

But what is experienced in front of a saint, is a pale analogy when compared to the experience which the Person of Jesus Christ occasioned to the apostles and, since then, too all the believers.

Who had once such an experience, he can no longer cannot affirm that there does not exist any divine reality in front of him, but it is all a myth, a subjective creation.

This character of absolute transcendence of Jesus, it hasn't been less experienced after He ascended to heaven, but even more intensively. On the other hand, through His ascent to heavens, Jesus has placed his Godhead in the state of communion with the people from everywhere. Everybody can stay in communion with God, differing from what one could have had, if He hadn't embodied Himself. Jesus is close to the people through His humanity, but He is close to everybody through His Godhead which is united with His humanity. And He is not close only like an exterior person, but also like an inside reality through the infinity of his Godhead⁵⁵.

⁵⁵ **E. BURGER**, W. c.p. 227: "Der Glaubende soll sich nicht nur objektiv betrachtend, sondern subjektiv existieren zu Christus verhalten. Christus soll nicht nur gegenständliche Gegebenheit, sondern unendliche Wirklichkeit... Immer sieht die christliche Verkündigung ihre Aufgabe darin von der gegenständlichen Gegebenheit des geschichtlichen Jesus weiter zu führen zur Innerlichkeit und Unendlichkeit des lebendigen Christus".

But, like an interior reality too, He is something else than the product of our soul's powers. He irradiates there, out of the objectivity of His Person. This reality in us, but different from us, due to which our power of the soul grows to a more ample and pure life, it is called pneumatological reality, unlike the spiritual reality, which is a product of our subjective efforts. The spiritual life is an internal life, not exclusively subjective, but of intimate relation between the own self and Jesus Christ through the Holy Ghost.

It is a life reported to the supreme our You, to the real transcendence, which fulfills us like existence.

Thereby, the embodiment of the Son of God it proves to be the full unveiling of God, like our fulfillment and salvation. The *me-You* report, in which God entered with us by the fact that He made Himself like one of us, showing through that that He is God and giving us all the gifts of His godlike friendship, it is the one of maximum approach and love.

III.

THE ETERNAL GROUNDS OF THE SALVATION

III. 1. The Salvation Indicated by the Trinitarian Communion

His commitment through embodiment, towards the people's salvation, it was decided by God from eternity, because He foreseen the man's drama.

This detail, which is clearly announced by the Holy Scripture, it is a great mystery. It hints, without rational understanding, to the problem of God's liberty and predestination. If God took this decision from eternity, it still can this be a so-called decision?

Making a decision it means, in our experience, to have been standing on a moment in which you could have taken another decision. But, if He hadn't made this decision from eternity, it would have meant that God hadn't foreseen the fall of the man and he would have committed Himself to a huge and important action of embodiment and sacrifice, at one corner of His existence. An equally difficult to be clarified question, it is this: would the fall of Adam still remain a deliberate act, if it existed from eternity, readymade, the plan for the salvation of the man?

The religious cogitation, which moves into interior of the faith, by unfolding its content and by nourishing from the experience of the Revelation, of a live report with God, it does not claim to exhaust the mysteries of this report, but to establish that this report is savior and to see through what it specifically is savior. The report between the self and God, by being the base of the believer's certitude, of the one who has made the experience of the Revelation, this one knows that through cogitation he cannot think God outside this report and, consequently, into the transcendent unilateralism or in fusion with the immanence. The rationality, which has not the experience of the Revelation, but it is carried only by the not-existential curiosity to know, it can place God either into the transcendent alternative or into the immanent one. It can say either only that God is unchangeable, or only that He is changeable. But the religious man, who experiences God like a true God, but also like God the Savior, like God Who has committed Himself to man's salvation, he cannot see and cogitate God but only in the paradoxical formula: unchangeable but with an activity who minds about the changing of the world, transcendent but present into the order of immanence. We cannot know exactly how God is, but the paradox expresses a general truth, certainly valid about Him: He is God, but a God interested in the world. The truth

is not, by any means, into formal logic's unilateral and simplistic formulas. (See our article "About dogma", in "The Thinking", April, 1941).

This wide truth is expressed also by the dogma about the God's eternal decision regarding the embodiment and the salvation. It spares the God's changelessness, but in the same time relates Him to the world and to the time, though while elevating Him, through the liberty that it recognizes to Him, above it.

But this dogma expresses something more: the importance God grants it to the world and to the salvation. The world it is the product of God's freedom, but it is not an arbitrary or accidental product. The world is connected to God's eternity, but with a connection which God wants it freely. It is not thought by God against His own will. God is with the world in report of free but though eternal thinking and judgment. In the scheme of this antinomy, of which living depths we cannot permeate, are saved both the dignity of the divine's liberty and of the changelessness, and also the dignity and the importance of the world. Both of them are lived by the faith and about both of them are noticed by the theological cogitation. The same things are to be told about the report of God with the salvation of the world. God is free towards the world, but He still is unchangeable, and the world is tied on His eternity. The salvation appears like a profoundly serious work, not only for God has committed Himself in it, but also for it constitutes His preoccupation and His eternal plan. Even more than the creation, the commitment of God, from eternity, to saving the world and even through the embodiment and the crucifixion of His Son, it unveils us His endless love for world. The measure of the mystery "hidden from eternity and unknown by angels" it consist in the measure of God's

love for the world. Not even the angels would have imagined that in the bosom of God, it hides since eternity, braided with His being, such a great love towards the world. The showing of this love it is in the same time the unveiling of an unbelievable value of the world. Nobody, before the embodiment of the Son of God, was capable to give so much importance to the world, and especially to the man. The full revelation of God, into embodiment, it is in the same time the full unveiling of the most astonishing value of the man. The embodiment of the Son of God, out of love towards man, it stays in connection with the way which God Himself exists in. What He wants freely since eternity it is something according to His form of life. The embodiment didn't take place against His will, but neither was like an arbitrary invention. ***This reason of the embodiment, placed into divine existence itself, it cannot be but the Trinitarian form of communion of the divine existence.*** The Creation is neither a Trinity's prolongation, nor it is the Salvation. So they don't have a character of necessity. The Trinity does not need the world and the world's salvation, for His own completion and happiness, this meaning the widening of the communion. If that had been the case, the people must have been equals to the divine Persons. The Creation was accomplished through a jump outside the natural course of divine life. The Salvation stays in connection with this jump. Consequently, they are products of will, exclusively of the divine will. But it is not less true, that the Creation and the Salvation have the reason which indicated them, in the internal life of God. They are not asked by the internal life of God, but they are shown like possibilities according to it. Here we must stop: ***the origin of the Creation and of the Salvation it is at the point where the indication of the being and the decision of the divine will, they meet with one another.*** This is the general truth which is comprised

by the mystery of eternal decision regarding the Creation and the Salvation, a mystery that we cannot understand with our thickened mind, with its stiffened notions, it cannot express but by combining unilateral formulas, extreme formulas, which appear to stand in contradiction.

All the theologians, headed by Dionysus Areopagite⁵⁶, deduce the Creation of the world from the characteristic of the good in God. The good wants to be tasted by as many beings as possible. But how can somebody be good, unless he is in communion? That's why, one can say that the indicative reason towards the Creation of the world it is the Trinitarian communions of God, which, just for it is a happy communion, it wants also other beings to enjoy this happiness, and the falling scattered the human being out of this communion, God wants also to restore them through His embodiment.

Some of the Russian theologians, like S. Bulgakov and N. Berdiaev go in this direction until to affirm some kind of eternal humanity of the Son of God, or some kind of existential human theandric-ism. Bulgakov, for instance, he argued that the self or the subject of the man is not a created one; only its nature – consisting of rational soul and of body – it is created. But also the human nature is an exact copy of divine nature, it is the divine being put into state of becoming, it is created Sophia that corresponds to uncreated Sophia. The human self, by being uncreated,

⁵⁶ "And like our sun, not considering itself and not deciding, but through the fact itself of be, light all which are capable to impart from his light, after their power, the same way also the Good (which is above the sun, like it is the archetype in its real existence above an fade icon) irradiates to all that exists the rays of the entire goodness according to the everyone measure. Through them constituted all intelligible and spirituals existences, powers and works"... P. G. 3. 693 – 696.

he is by divine essence, that between it and the divine Logos is not any qualitative difference, and between his nature and the nature of the Logos there is a perfect correspondence. The divine Logos, by taking in Jesus Christ the place of the subject, of the human self, there hasn't taken place an event too new and too inadequate to the human nature, but one quite normal. A human self of divine essence has been replaced for the supreme self of divine essence. The carrier of uncreated Sophia has taken under his leadership the created Sophia too, which is otherwise carried on also by selves of divine essence.

These speculations, partially having their origin in the doctrine of Iakob Böhme⁵⁷ about Sophia, they have lost the religious support of the Revelation through faith. They are the fruit of the free fantasy. The theory of Bulgakov gets out, besides that, from the Christian logical scheme, passing into pantheism⁵⁸. That's why it is recommended lots of reserve when studying it.

The Revelation tells us that the man is created in the image of God, and the Salvation follows the Restoration of the man, "to be according to the image of His Son" (Ro: 8, 29), son of the Father, in the likeness of His Only Begotten Son. But the Holy Scripture does not comprise any speculation about the substance. It bases the adoption on the love that is established between God and the man. It is a love that comes from God. The love which founds this filial report, it is descended into the man by the Spirit of God. It is a love that comes from God. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." They have taken "the Spirit of resurrection" (Rom 8: 14–15)⁵⁹.

⁵⁷ A. KOYRE, op. c.

⁵⁸ Agnetz Bojii (The Lamb of God), Paris, 1933.

⁵⁹ "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth

The Son of God, the one eternal and the Only Begotten One, He has come to place us also into the report in which He is with the Father – though we are created – and therefore, into a report brother-to-brother with Himself⁶⁰. This was also wanted by God, through Creation. Only in this sense, whereas the man is capable of this report, It can be said that the man has or he is capable of some conformity with God.

The communion requires the partners to have something that approaches them, in order to help them to get along with each other. Because it is from God that power that makes the man capable of communion, not being but His love itself, it can be said about Him that, whereas the man is created, there is an abyssal difference between him and God, though the man is in His image, but the love overwhelms this difference, by making the man, like Maximos the Confessors said: God by grace⁶¹. But if it is possible to hooking in to the man the power of the divine love, he will have to have, through the Creation itself, something in him which to be hooked. There is into man, in other words, the capacity to receive the love, through which to respond

his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Gal. 4: 4-6).

⁶⁰ Saint Gregory of Nyssa, G.P. 46, 628 A. See also: Aufhauser, *Die Heilslehre deshalb*. Gregor von Nizza, München 1910, p. 116.

⁶¹ “If we are in the image of God, let’s become ours and of God, better said only of God, by no longer bearing anything earthly within us, in order to get closer to God and to become gods (...), receiving from God the quality as gods (...)”, G.P. 99, 1189. “Towards this God has made us to become husbands of the godlike nature (...) and partakers of His eternity and to become as Him through the deification by grace”, G.P. 90, 1193. Quotes with similar content, belonging to other Holy Fathers, there are mentioned by Nichifor Crainic, *Course of Orthodox Mystique*, taped by E. Olteanu, Bucharest, 1936.

to God's love. More precisely, the man has, through Creation, the capacity to become a subject of the divine love, capacity which is not erased even through sin. The objects do not have this capacity, neither the animals do. The man becomes actual subject of the love only when he receives in him the love of God, but the capacity of becoming subject of the love which descends from above, he must have it too. And we have to understand this capacity of becoming subject of the divine love not like a passive reception capacity, but like a capacity to acquire it and to grow up in it also through his own efforts, because the man must collaborate to his salvation.

The capacity of becoming a subject of the divine love, namely of becoming God through grace, it must correspond to the manner of God into man, and the present state of subject of this love to His resemblance. In itself, the capacity of the man of becoming subject of the divine love it means his capacity to receive the love into an ever growing measure, through his own efforts, and to manifest it like something of his own. The object cannot receive the love, neither it can acquire and manifest the love like its own. It is required some activity on this purpose, and the fact that love come like a gift, it does not exclude the activity⁶². The capability of receiving something and of manifesting that something like an own feature, it is the characteristic of the subject in general. The man is

⁶² About this together work of the activity and passivity throughout our life of knowledge and love, see Louis Lavelle, w. c.: « L'amour jaillit de la partie active de nôtre mais on même temps il est éprouvé dans cette partie passive où nous subissons l'action d'autrui, quelquefois cette pure action de présence qui e déjà en lui une action d'amour avant d'être parvenue à la conscience distincte d'elle-même ». P. 526. « L'attention nous rend admirablement sensible la corrélation de l'activité et de la passivité de l'esprit qui reçoit du réel à proportion même que l'acte de l'attention plus d'intensité et de pureté », p. 482.

subject before being the bearer of the divine love, though he wholly becomes subject only through by receiving and manifesting this love.

The subject is an ultimate centre of spontaneity and of conscious self-determination. It is a conscious source of independence. The conscience and the liberty, which means the capacity of free decided activity, they form his essential features. The man realizes about himself like being an ultimate and sovereign centre of all his acts. He has the conscience to realize his sovereign self-determination and to use it, for, if he didn't determine himself consciously, he would have not determined himself, but he would have been determined by something else than himself. But conscience is also knowledge and knowledge offers to liberty a real picture, rich, of all its possibilities.

Through the subject quality, the man is into some measure *causa sui*, in the sense that himself is the ultimate forum and source of his acts, and not an external or internal force which does not listen him. This is the reason why he is the one who creates, choosing one of many self-accomplishing possibilities. He is not *causa sui* in an absolute manner, because he does not give himself also the existence like a departure point, neither the possibilities which to be fulfilled.

But even if the man is not *causa sui* in an absolute manner, he surpasses, through his subject quality, the objects. The object does not exist *per se*, and it does not have an interior existence and self-determination. The object is the victim of the subject because of being the subject's passive material. The object exists only for the subject, and it has an existence noticed only by the subject. The object is a tool without any internal resonance, and having only an external resonance. The object has lesser existence than the subject. To realize about the existence it is a way to exist more and to

have an extra power.

God must be cogitated only in this direction of a Subject. But He is the absolute subject, He is *causa sui* in the eminent meaning, whereas neither His existence He does have it from a force above Him, but Himself is the source of it. To Him we must attribute, if not all the ways of existence, but surely the superior ones, and the most superior way of existence is to be a subject. God is the full Subject, by being the absolute Sovereign of His acts, and by not depending on anything and by having - more than anybody - the existence for Himself and into Himself like a good which He enjoys of, not like a good for others, neither needing others in order to be confirmed into existence. The fact that we are experiencing the existence of a man in the second person, when for us it is made the passing towards the subject, when directly speaks to us, like being more intense than the one of an object, or like the one of a man in the third person, when he makes for us the passing towards the object, it is one more reason that God can be conceived only like a Subject. In report with the objects or with a man in the third person, we are experiencing a less existence, because we are too full of ourselves and they have not sufficient power to awake us in the front of a new reality differing from us. The fact of thinking at them, it doesn't place us in an real enough report with them, but it makes us to close in ourselves.

God, when He is experienced *de facto*, He must be experienced like a reality Who imposes us like an existence of maximum intensity - not like a passive and powerless object of our thinking, but like a voluntary Subject Who confines us. In the Old Testament, God calls Himself: "I Am That I Am" (Yahweh). It is his adequate name. From all the realities of the world, the one that we experience like a more intense reality it is the man in the second person, because then he is speaking in the first person, by manifesting his will,

and he makes us to be silent and listen to him, he snatches us off the magic circle of the egocentrism, and then we are not only us active by thinking and action, but he is too. That's why we experience God more adequately when we hear that He speaks in the first person, and we keeping silence with fear and trembling. When we start speaking about God, we got out from the unmediated experience of His presence and of His existence of supreme intensity. But the man can tell His most adequate name: "I Am That I Am", because it would be an impiety the man to substitute Himself to God and to speak in His place these words. That's why the Jews pass over the word Yahweh when reading of the Holy Scripture, and they only listen to it, or, putting under its consonances the vowels from Adonai, they read Jehovah. In fact, the words Adonai-Lord, with their meaning of sovereign authority, they are the most appropriate to actualize in man, when utters it, the experience of the mastering power of the overwhelming reality of God.

From all these it results that God is Subject, and the man shows God's image, precisely in this noblesse title of His being.

Because we have told that the salvation consists in elevating the man from the simple state of an object, to that one of a subject of the divine love, the question that arises is: does love constitute the perfection of the character of the subject, and God too has the love? In order to answer this question there are necessary few words about love.

Love has the surety, the experience of *you* like a reality which arises above the world of the objects, like a reality which does not exist only to stay at my discretion, or to be swallowed into the mass of what it is indifferent to me. All my inclinations and attitudes, through which I am using or trying to use something, because of making me lonelier they aren't either love or

subject of love, or even subject in a full sense. I can become wholly conquered by this kind of inclinations or attitudes. Love is that sight from me, which, when discovering a *you*, it gets me out from my loneliness, it gives me the experience of the fellowship, of the deep friendship - a total one -, of that *you* are with me to the deep on my heart, into the most intimate joys and pains, that I hold on you, that you are helping me, that you are caressing and relieving me, even into the most dreadful experience of the death's loneliness. But I have through *you* these joys and this relief, not because I am thinking at me. Immediately that I have this selfish thought, there isn't love any longer, neither fellowship, but only loneliness. I have all through *you*, because I am no longer thinking at me, but I am aimed only towards you, towards your experience. I forget then about all my matters. Nothing hurts me anymore, nor makes me restless because of what concerns me, but I am preoccupied only with what concerns you. I cast away all my burdens, by taking you exclusively to be my concern and my burden. I am living through you. The ones who love each-other they reciprocally carry their burdens. (Jesus takes our sins and we take His sufferings). In love I have found my supreme happiness in *you*. Love is the supreme responsibility for another. On this way we experience also the love for our fellow human: like a subject burdened by the supreme responsibility for us, and having in this his supreme happiness. All it is owned by a person it serves like an instrument to communicate love. As ownership, the nature makes no sense; likewise the man's body; the same the intimate features. The one who is in love with somebody he gives everything to the other one, even his own self. But even in total surrender of himself, he still remains the subject of the surrender. Everything serves to love, to communion, to the *me-you* report. Through love we discover, like a supreme reality, the another like a subject, like

something who limits us, like something that is no longer below us, but he is in front of and above us, in the sense that he compels us with an infinitely deep seriousness, like something which we cannot control, even if physically we could. And in the same time love is the assuming of this responsibility and full joy in serving.

By combining all these manifestations and countless other manifestations, we can tell that through love we affirm the other one like a free subject, like we are, and we do not reduce him to the state of an object, so that he also will affirm us. We make our happiness addicted to him, after we generously recognize him and help him to consolidate into the dignity of ultimate and free centre of his acts. Through love we give everything we have to the other one, accomplishing him, and then we receive everything from him. Because we need our confirmation in existence, through the free appreciation and consideration of the other one, we do everything to elevate him to this state⁶³.

The love is the leaning towards the other one, in order to give, and not to receive (not to pluck from him, like from the object, without the consent of him, but to depend on his will).

How much it gets along then, the love with the sovereign character of the subject? And how much it fulfills him?

It was noticed that only the love makes us fully free. Only what we do out of love we do that by being ourselves completely in freedom⁶⁴. The sovereignty does not mean selfishness, but lack of compulsion, namely spontaneity. By giving everything to another one, we do that in freedom, and by receiving everything from the

⁶³ LOUIS LAVELLE, W. c. 526-30.

⁶⁴ LOUIS LAVELLE, W. c. 526-33.

other one, we receive that only from the one who loves us, and who, therefore, does not force us, but he increases our liberty. The love of the other one - its manifestations -, it softens your obduracy, and it deepens what is noble into you and it makes you to find yourself into your intimacy. The liberty of both of them, it increases in this communication, in this encouragement and in this reciprocal affirmation. The man becomes the slave of the passions, getting weaker in his character of subject, when he does not love. The selfishness, the envy, the fear, they are forces which limit his liberty and sovereignty. The subject is a subject only in communion with other subjects. So, the full subject is the subject being the bearer of love; the full subject is an unreserved intentionality after communion. The conscience and the liberty, far from excluding this intentionality, they serve it. By the fact that the man is the full subject only when he is a love bearer, there occurs the consequence that the full man's existence is not possible without the love from God, without the report with Him. A human nature existing by itself it is an *eo ipso* into a under-natural⁶⁵ state. Without the permanent love from God, the man lives an ill existence.

But though, so blunt and incomplete, the capacity of being a subject of love, and therefore the subject character itself, it may be found also into the man who has not in him the love for God, namely the fallen man. He feels over him the force of the other's look and opinion, and he feels himself compelled to take the other one into count; in everything he does, he feels the another somewhat like a "subject" who does not stay in a simple subordination and indifference like

⁶⁵ The Catholicism sustains that the man went out from the connection with God, through the fall, while still remaining with the "pure nature". This nature is, in any case, "something tormented, something that God does not want".

any object does. He feels himself towards another like being into a special reference which is above the objects, in an obligation to answer the expectations of the other one. As that one is a subject, he is a subject also, whereas he is capable of answering and he feels himself compelled to responsibility⁶⁶. He feels the other one like a subject because he feels himself compelled to refer - in everything he does - to the opinion of the other one, to the expectation of that one, and to respond through all the action and through all his life to that one. He feels that he does everything for the other one. The other one's advocate in us, which makes us to be accountable to him, it is our conscience. On the measure we feel the obligation to answer the other one, on the measure of the strength the conscience's voice has, it grows up within us the capacity of love and the subject. Most of the time the man struggles against this obligation. Though involuntary he works for the other one's sight, he perverts this work by mixing it and contaminating it with the sentiment of vanity. But the vanity, of which force no man - from the ones who are deprived of love - can escape, by mixing in it the pride and the care about others, it is also a confession of the man's responsibility, of his character as a subject. The intentionality for communion, which it is the characteristic of the state of love, it manifests - no matter how hard the man tries to choke it -, even in the man's fallen state, like a fundamental structure of his being. The newer philosophy has established this thing with full clarity⁶⁷.

⁶⁶ **E. BRUNNER** sees into the responsibility the human being and the God's manner in him. (*Der Mensch im Widerspruch*, Berlin, 1937).

⁶⁷ For example **M. HEIDEGGER** says: "Als Mit sein «ist» daher das Dasein wesentlich um willen Anderer. Das muss als existentielle Wesensaussage verstanden werden. Auch wenn das

If the final destination of the man is to be a subject of love, by being created on this purpose he has received the seal of God's image, and if the salvation does not aim but only the raising of the man to the likeness with the Son of God, by making him also a son, and this is done by sending the divine love, namely of the Son's Ghost in him, then the godlike model which stays at the basis of the creation and salvation, the divine model of the man, or the "heavenly man", he won't have to consists in something else, but into the consummate character of the love in communion. And this is God because He is a Trinity of Persons.

The reason and the model of the creation and of the salvation would therefore be the way which God exists in the Holy Trinity.

But we cannot fully apply to God what has been said about the report between the human subject and love.

Of course, God fully fulfills the character as Person, not only because He is the supreme existence and sovereignty, but also because He is love. But, while the love to the man being bound to his insufficiency, due to the created character of his, the man's love is experienced like a necessity, like a fulfillment; unlike that, God does not experience it like covering an insufficiency He would have. The divine Persons are living, of course, into an absolute reference to each-other and everyone gives all He has, and Himself too, to the other One, but still remaining the most consummate giving, or being a subject just because of that. But They do not feel except the love to give.

Though everyone, by giving everything, He also

jeweilige faktische Dasein sich an Andere nicht kehrt, ihrer bedürftig zu sein vermeint, oder aber sie entbehrt, ist es in der Wiese des Mit seins. Im Mit sein als dem existentialen Unwillen Anderen sind diese in ihrem Dasein schon «erschlossen»“. Sein und Zeit, p. 123.

receives everything, They do not have - like the man has - the sentiment of a lack which will be fulfilled through the love of the other person. The plenitude of existence (the divine being) is so un-separated from everyone, than the giving is simultaneously a receiving too. The intentionality for communion at the Holy Trinity's Persons it mustn't be understood like being started from a lack like at the man, but at Them the love must be understood like the most pristine impulse, like the manifestation of the fullest existence possessed in unity.

The unity of being doesn't do anything but expressing the fact that every person possesses continuously the entire existence. On the peaks of love the giving and the receiving are no longer noticed, but there is only the joy of a common possession. Although, in the doctrine about God it is highlighted not only the unity but also the trinity, being showed that even to God the joy is an expression of communion.

Though every person is the plenitude of the existence, the happiness it doesn't stay into the lonely possession of it, but into the commune possession. Though God has - into the infinity of His existence - the source and the reason of a boundless happiness, through the Christian teaching it is removed from this happiness any selfish feature. The joy and the happiness cannot exist but together with the generosity, and with the affirmation of the other.

All doctrines about God, which want to argue that unlike the people, He can have in Himself the happiness of an infinite self-contemplation, to that He doesn't need anything else, they are surpassed by Christianity, the only one which has removed the selfishness from this happiness, the only one which doesn't miss the essential element of the generosity, without being necessary for this the affirmation of the

principle that the world was created from ever. And at God, the happiness is created not only by the possession of the existence, but also by the communion of the subjects⁶⁸.

The personal character of God it implies the multi-personality, because of person without the joy of communion and of the love, that person is not fulfilled. And how to God won't ever miss the happiness and the joy, He neither misses the character as Person, a Trinitarian character. The theory of Iacob Böhme and of the other anterior German mystics, according to whom the personality, respectively the three-personality of God, it is an later stage in God's evolution, sprung from a deitas, it has also at its basis an unfinished abyss⁶⁹, and it doesn't correspond to the Christian way. In the East, in contrast with the West where has been always manifested a philosophical and pantheist unifying tendency in order to deduct the personal and Trinitarian character of God from an impersonal substance, it was affirmed the eternal coexistence of the unity and trinity of God. The personal and Trinitarian character of God is not less essential, and it is not a derivate from His being, but it always comes out of the eternity without begin, out of the supreme reality having a personal a Trinitarian character, and being in the same time a unity in the most complete sense of the word⁷⁰.

⁶⁸ Saint Maxim the Confessor, P. G. 90, 892, says: "The Judaic conception, limiting the unique principle at one person and this existing without the Word and the Holy Ghost, it makes it narrow and un- consummated and almost un-subsisting, like one devoid of word and life. This way they fall from reasons contrary to pagans into the same evil of the atheism."

⁶⁹ ALEXANDER KOYRÖ, W. c. p. 225-261.

⁷⁰ The Saint Maxim the Confessor, w. c.: "The Trinity in oneness and the oneness in Trinity. Not one into the other one. Because the Trinity isn't in oneness like a being accident. Neither the oneness in Trinity, because isn't a (simple) quality. But, is

Thus, the man in his subject quality he is an image of God. The Creation is a free divine work, but under the indication of the divine life. And the Salvation reestablishes and consummates the Creation according to the model of the Trinitarian life, by elevating the man from the damaged image of God to the likeness with Him.

III. 2. The Son of God, the Fulfiller of the Salvation Work

Through creation, The Father wanted to increase the number of subjects who to enjoy the happiness of the communion with Him. Not for His happiness, because the communion with the other divine subjects does not permit any decrease of His happiness. He wanted to have more sons. He wanted more subjects to whom to be their Father. But the divinity neither multiplies nor decreases. Other subjects cannot come to the existence but through creation. The created subjects cannot remain or do not raise to the height required by this communion. But, what is inferior by creation; it is elevated through love to the height of a son, on an equal level, in order to be possible to establish the intimacy and the understanding. By creation it is established only the capacity to receive the love. Then the love descends abundantly upon man, and it elevates him on the level of son, of being able to be a partner to God. Love is godlike, it is uncreated. Love can dress and make, through gift, the

neither one from the other one. Because doesn't come the Trinity from oneness like its product, because It isn't became, and auto-reveals". But neither the oneness isn't a synthesis of the three persons or something more appropriate watched only with the mind in those three ones.

man like a god. We can say, together with Sergei Bulgakov, that into the man there is something created and there is something uncreated, but only into the man who stays in report with God. Love, by being godlike, it makes the man immortal, it dresses a created nature in divine features, like Maximos the Confessor said⁷¹.

Why the mission of saving the people it falls right to the Son? The Son lives only with His sight looking towards the Father, and not wanting anything else but to fulfill the Father's will, to serve the Father. And He wants to be as much as possible subject to the love of the Father, to live for the Father, with His sight aimed towards the Father, fulfilling the Father's will. Thereby, the Son wants the largest possible number of sons of the Father, of His brothers. He fulfills the will of the Father at the Creation. But, because the created people do not raise at the divine subjects height, and they fall into a tormented existence, the Son intervene again to fulfill the will of the Father, by restoring the people in a report of sons. It falls to the Son to fulfill this work through creation and through salvation too, because He is in the role of the doer of Father's will, and He – the Son – must come closer, in a special way, to the ones who must resemble Him. In fact, the human subjects bear in their being and in their meaning, in a special way, the likeness of the Son and of His relation like a listener and venerator of God.

In addition to these, the Son is called by John the Evangelist, The Word. But, by the fact he gave this name to a person, namely to a person who does not live into the loneliness of the contemplation, but into the report of the communication, he indicated that he hasn't understood, through The Word, only the meaning, the impersonal idea, which can be discovered

⁷¹ "Godlike and happy love bound man to God and shows God the God lover", P. G. 90, 1192.

by anyone in things without being communicate to him, and he didn't exclusively understand a general concept which God cogitates it eternally, and that He incorporates all the things He creates in it, and us having to discover it. The Word (the sense) discovered thereby through our mind, it would not be a proper Revelation, but the actualization of something that is in our mind. Our intellect, capable by its own efforts, after an evolution time, to find by itself what God thinks and to comprise exactly like Him, it would not differ essentially from the one of God. From here to the identification of the human intellect to the divine one, it is only a step, and the so-called Revelation becomes inutile.

In reality is about a Word as Person which the Son of God unveils to us through Revelation. It is a word which we cannot bring out or find it out with our human mind. This Word is beyond any height which the human intellect can raise to. But it is beyond, not as meaning, because if this has been the case it would have been given to us to be incorporate into our memory and then we could have fulfilled by ourselves what it comprises in it. We would have been, furthermore, under the regime of the ancient law. It is beyond, into the meaning that through this Word God Himself is nigh to us, close not like sense, because then we would have been alone ourselves, but like a Person, like a Subject who limits us, like a supreme reality different from us, Who scatters our loneliness and forces us to ascertain it and to take attitude.

In fact, the primordial meaning of the word it is that of manifestation of one person towards another one, in what is not physical reality, identical to the world of the things, but like a spiritual subject. The word is the main and always present mean and instrument of any communication between persons. The word supposes always two persons. The word is a dialog even when a

person keeps silent, because through silence that persons involves, and upholds the word of another one. The one who speaks realizes that: the other one answers him inside, the other one takes attitude. Even a professor who speaks about who knows what insect, at his desk, **if he hadn't and auditorium which he knows about that it follows him in what he is saying, he would not have the appetite to speak. The speaking of the man in loneliness it is an illusory placing into a state of quasi-community:** he imagines what he would say, what he would told, **what he will say** when he will have a person or another in front of him.

The word, in its full meaning, it is not a senses exposure for the impersonal world, but the impartation of an attitude towards other persons, it is the affirmation of the man like a subject in order to prepare, if hasn't accomplished the communion immediately. The man feels the need that to be regarded as a subject by another, to notice that he is not a simple object and so to predispose the other one to grant him a more attentive consideration.

These calls of the man towards another man they use the reasons exposure, precisely in the shown goal. Not the sense itself is the focusing point, but its subject and the attention to the other.

The Greek thinking detached the meaning from its personal duality in which it has always been, from the *me-you* dialog, from its purpose to serve, in the concrete historical instant, the communion between two or more people, by taking him like a temporal and impersonal reality, like something to what does not meet its sense ever. And it connected the term: "word" – Logos – to the so understood sense.

The Word, however, like shows it also the Greek name **Logos**, which come from λέγω, *I say*, it means directly always through **speaking**, namely intentional manifestation of a person towards another

one. The word it is the vehicle of the communion, the bridge between persons like subjects. The word expresses the conscious intentionality of a person towards communion, being in the same time the instrument through which is awakened and attracted the other one. And, whereas the person is in principal mode intentionality towards communion, and the word his expression, we can tell that the person is word. Interior word, in tension, until expresses himself, and exterior word when the person expresses himself. The exterior word starts from the interior word, and this one cannot but to prolong itself to exterior. The person is word, a provocative word, an awakening word to another person by attracting that person into communion.

By the fact that God is named not “a word” but “The Word”, it is showed that He is not a person among other persons, but The Person by excellence. In Him the Person is accomplished on a supreme degree, namely the intentionality towards communion and, through this, the awakening power of subjects and dragging them into a communion report. The word, being the supreme way which a person imposes himself to us through, like a presence, narrowing the mystifier selfishness of any other reality except the self, the word being consequently the supreme means of revelation of the most intensive and non-cancellable reality, namely of the person, by the fact that the Son of God is named thereby, it is shown that He has, from the Persons of the Holy Trinity, the role of revealing God to people. He is particularly the subject of the Revelation.

We acknowledge that, through these emphases, it has been shown rather that the Son of God is named The Word, because He has received the special role of God's revelation and of people's salvation, rather than this nomination would represent an own situation

in inter-Trinitarian reports, considered in themselves. But, besides the general indication that the roles which are assumed by the Trinitarian Persons towards outside have an explanation, a supposition, in Their eternal existence, it is hard to tell something in this respect, because the Revelation does not illuminate us. We dare not to affirm that also in internal godlike life, the Son especially represents the intentionality towards communion. We can attribute Him the mission of Revelation, because the whole ecclesiastical tradition attempts to see in Him, the One through Whom the Father looks at Himself, the One Who reflects the splendor of the Father (Jew. 1, 3), though this is a different kind of revelation than the so-called one: through this revelation the Father knows Himself, but proper to revelation it is to know something else than your person. It is probably that between these two revelations there still is a bond, even it is harder to see it. On one hand, the Son, who manifests the Father, the glory of His brightness, He will reveal the Father's glory also to the people, through His revelation. The Father is the Hidden One, He is the not-revealed One, and only the Son has access to the Father, but the Son knows and confesses and mirrors the Father. Ontologically, to the creature it is impossible to notice the Hidden, the Indeterminable, and the Ultimate Cause of everything. Only the Son gives word towards Him. The Son is thereby the Trinity's Word. On the other hand, the Father does not look only at Himself into the Person of the Son, but He also looks at the Son's Person.

But, why would be the intentionality towards communion, among the Holy Trinity, only belonging to the Son? Doesn't this intentionality fall to every Trinitarian Person and, for Each of Them is Person on the plenary degree, why aren't Each of Them called as the Word?

Of course, Each Trinitarian Hypostasis is a

consummate intentionality towards communion and therefore a Person on the supreme degree, but the Son's intentionality carries a special character. The Trinitarian Persons, namely the divine intentionality towards communion, are not uniform, but Each One has His own character. The Son represents in a special mode: the reverence, the obedience, the serving, the obligation, in report with the Father. The Father is: the generosity, the dedication, the first word. But if the meaning and the power of the word stays into dialog, what makes the word a so-called word and it is not let to a sole way, as monolog, it is the second part of the dialog: the answer. The fulfilling of the word, what is tensely expected, it is the answer. BY answer it is accomplished the resting of the communion, it manifests the fulfillment of it, the evidence that it is not only a *me*, but a duality of persons. The Son, by being the second Trinitarian Person, He is the first sign of the personal character, wanting communion, of God. "Give me a word", "tell me a word" - we often hear a man begging to another. His question does not comprise yet the surety of the existence of a communion, the surety of righteousness, of the possibility of the real word. The question is not yet the fulfilled word; even if there is an overwhelming intentionality towards communion.

The Father has the first word, but the plenitude of the Trinitarian communion it is shown through the importance of Son, like the fulfiller of the word.

This might be the motif why the Son is named right on His place into the Holy Trinity, the Word. In the character of obligation of His Person we do not found then also the motif of the particular resemblance between His Person and the human persons. No man has the possibility to be the primordial and generous so-called intentionality. What can he give to the fellow humans? His natural situation is the one of

humbleness, of assuming the responsibility, of obligation, and of serving. And the Son, He is under this aspect, the man's heavenly model, He is the un-created Man. The eternal obligation, in the same time free and loving one, into the bosom of the divinity, this is the great, but also the comforting mystery of the Christianity, which stays at the basis of the man's salvation.

We specify also here that the intentionality towards communion and the obligation of the Son inside the Holy Trinity, it must be conceived differently from all the correspondent characteristics of the man. According to the things we have told related to the reciprocal love between divine Persons, the Son's intentionality towards communion – which is otherwise commune to all the three Persons, like a characteristic of the Person – it is not clasped with the insufficiency sentiment, like it is clasped to the man, but it is a positive tendency of love for the Father, from the superabundance of His existence, which He receives it continuously from the Father, like a manifestation of Him towards the Son⁷².

⁷² Over all we don't forget even for an instant that God is beyond any human idea, and any attribute from the world it can't be address Him directly. The negative theology is right when denies to God even the existence, in the sense that at Him there doesn't exist something like our existence. But isn't less true that all what is positive and good in the world it has its cause in God and so in a superior mode, an unspeakable one, it is comprised into God. Cf. A. Koyré, W. c. p. 225: "Ja es soll alles aus dem Nichts entstehest, weil das Entstehungsprinzip, die letzte Quelle, aus der die Welt entspring und die sie erklären soll, augenscheinlich von dem enthalten darf, was die Welt selbst enthält, sonst könnte es eben nicht letztes Prinzip und Quelle sein, Andererseits muss dieses Prinzip und diese alles dessen, was sie anhält, erklären zu können". But, if it is inevitable to orient ourselves in the God's knowledge after what we find positive or negative in the world – with the concern that in Him they are into an infinite mode, a totally superior mode – any progress in the world's knowledge

But the direct meaning, the primordial one of the divine Word, in His intentionality voluntarily obliged towards communion, is doesn't mean that He has also the function of the reality discoverer, of its sense, and therefore also the meaning of the Logos. When a person calls us through his word into communion, he unveils us his reality too, one of the realities which really deserves this name, by not being only an illusory construction of our mind. The communion really places us into the bosom of the reality and it unveils us by this its meaning⁷³. The more the reality unveils us and it places us into its core, the more sounds into our ears of the divine Word, the supreme Person, Who is also the supreme Reality, in the experience of whom we experience everything that the reality comprises. The communion which we are with the reality in, it makes

and of the man it will mean internal life of God. We highlight so much the aspect of communion of the internal life of God, because in the new times it has been highlighted in a special mode this profound and noble aspect of the human reality.

⁷³ See also M. Heidegger, who shows right that the language comprises a sense and stays connected to the understanding, but there isn't any sense which not to be discovered by the understanding of a person and communicated to other one. Where it is a word there it is mandatory to be a person who utters it. The sense from the word has only the role to establish a connection, an agreement, an understanding between persons. Therefore it has also a function subordinated to the communion; it is a part from the whole called person of interpersonal relationship. "Rede ist die Artikulation der Verständlichkeit (and the **Verständlichkeit** it is an existential structure of the human person)... Als konstitutive Momente gehören zu ihr: das Worüber der Rede (des Beredete), das Geredete als solches, die Mitteilung und die Bekundung... Das Hören ist für das Reden konstitutiv... das Hören auf... ist das existentielle Offs ein des Daseins als Miteins", W. c. p. 161 – 163.

us thinking at it and this thinking is as true as it detaches less from the reality which we experienced, or we are experiencing it in communion. But, the thinking about the reality, namely about a person, until we are not into communion, if it doesn't have like a result only an illusion or a shadow of the reality, it won't be able to raise ever on its level of complexity and richness. Not the standing alone meaning, the individualistic one, the one monologue like, it corresponds to the truth, but the meaning which interprets the communion, the contact with the reality, that is accomplished through the word which creates communion. The "sense word" is in dependence with the "communion word" and they must continuously remain in this dependence. The reality or the profound truth, a lot more comprehensive, it is something what is discovered on the earth through the entry of God in report with the man. Only into heaven exists from ever, and there exists eternal and uninterrupted - right because God is an eternal - an uninterrupted and consummate communion. Only like a gift from the heavenly communion it is established on earth the reality and the truth. The truth on earth is the Son of God and through Him it is established any truth (Jo: 14: 6: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life")⁷⁴. Into the communion with Him we have the eternal not exhausted possibility of experiencing of the infinite reality. The transposition of this experience in ideas, which can multiply continuously and it can be organized in visions and lights increasingly clear and

⁷⁴ E. BRUNNER, *der Mittler*, Tübingen, 1930, p. 187: „The Christian faith is first of all the knowledge of God, therefore the eternal Revelator is like a Son of God, and in the same time Logos”, p. 185: “The knowledge of the real God, the personal one, it can't take place but through the real and personal impartation of God, through the revelation in which He impart us with what ourselves couldn't ever know through any thorough research, through any profound meditation”.

deeply penetrating, it is explicable through the fact that the common reality and the divine reality, like the supreme reality and like a source of the entire reality in special, it comprises structures, clarities, and ontological, ethical and esthetical rules, and it is not an amorphous entity in which cannot discern any meanings⁷⁵. For this reason, the divine Logos, like a supreme reality which reveals Himself, He is also the source of every idea and meaning of our mind. All the right ideas coming from the human culture are rays from His reality which hardly penetrates through the gloom of the ontological and moral distance, vague revelations of the Logos. "And the light shined in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." (Jo: 1: 5). False ideas or false aspects in human ideas are also rays from His reality, but deformed by the spiritual environment which is remote from God. When the full Revelation of the Logos it happens, He comes whole, like a Subject, close to us, and the ones who are imparted with the experience of this closeness they are illuminated, by turn, by the richness of meanings springing out of Him.

From all these, it results that, the Son of God has embodied Himself on the basis of a conformity between Him and the person of the man. The intentionality towards communion in which He is in report with the Father, He turns it also towards people, observing the value proportion in a case and another. But, especially in the orientation of His

⁷⁵ LOUIS LAVELLE, *La conscience de soi*, Paris, 1933: « L'intelligence ne peut pas voir la vérité sans que l'âme soit touchée ». P. 29, M. Heidegger considers he sense like a formal skeleton of the personal reality, which reveals itself: "... muss Sinn als das formal-existentielle Gerüst der Verstehen zugehörigen Ersohiossenheit begriffen werden. Sinn ist eine Existential des Daseins". W. c. p. 151.

benevolent love towards people, His intentionality towards communion it exclusively has the will to give, and not to receive, not of being a sign of the insufficiency, but of the supreme love. People have been able to, and they can easily feel that, from Jesus Christ, it is searching for them another intention of communion than the one from their fellow humans, one without any insufficiency, a supreme love, which has a maximum efficiency to reveal itself, and to be noticed.

The word – when is not much speaking – by being one with the person, it wants to address directly to the person of whose communion it is searching for. And only then it can reach its purpose. This is for, only then, the person who speaks, he stays in report with the spoken person. When I send a word through somebody, the intermediary does not comprise me and he cannot convey me in the same time with my word to the envisaged person. My word has become, somehow, the word of the intermediary. I am but only indirectly present, into a loose connection.

Thus, the words which were sent by the Son of God through prophets, they not only were the so-called Word, His Person itself, but words detached from Him. The prophets didn't have the words, of course, from themselves, though the words weren't identical to the Person of God. Their testimony was making us to believe that the Son of God is interested in our fate, but He wasn't sharing us with a full communion.

Where was the obstacle that He didn't come to tell us the Word directly, by entering the communion with us? Not at Him, for He is always the intentionality towards communion. The obstacle cannot be but within us. We weren't prepared to receive the Word, to listen to His calling to communion. Even today we hardly accept Him. And the Word does not impose Himself forcedly.

IV. THE HISTORY WAITING FOR THE FULL REVELATION

IV. 1. What Bethlehem and Golgotha Have Brought to Us?

The preparation of the people for receiving the Son of God as man, into a maximum closeness to them, it took a certain time. And it couldn't be done only through people. Therefore, there was a connection between people and God even before the producing of the maximum closeness report, with the role of preparing the people for this kind of closeness. If such a preparatory connection hadn't taken place, the people would have been incapable to understand the descent of God among them and to open their heart for accepting it.

The purpose of the prophets was to intermediate, and to uphold this connection, and to prepare the people for the future intimacy between God and them. The connection promulgated through prophets it was the Law of The Old Testament. (We are speaking here only about the positive, the unequivocal connection, searched for by God through the connection revealed in a supernatural manner, and not about the preparing into a wider sense, through the natural law, like it is observed at the pagan peoples). If we scrutinize the being of the law, not through its positive sense, but also through its insufficiency, we will ascertain the it had the role of preparing the full communion report between God and people.

About the insufficiency of the law we are aware of - no longer being under its regime - and also the prophets realized it. The proof is given by the fact that they showed that the regime of the law was transitory,

like one which asked for a consummation. Therefore, an important part of their prophetic activity was to herald the coming of Jesus Christ.

But the ones who stood under the regime of the law couldn't point satisfactory its insufficiency, because they have not tasted the happiness of the full report between God and man. The man who stays in darkness and who has not been imparted with the light, he can realize the insufficiency of the darkness, but he cannot satisfactorily specify its insufficiency, because he cannot compare it to the light. Only if we know the goods of the full Revelation - the final target towards which God wants to carry the man - we will be able to understand why those goods of the Revelation won't be reached through the Law. And, if we know this target, we will be able to realize what kind of means are required in order to reach it, and, if we know those means also by experience, we will be able to appreciate their wonderful fit to the aimed target.

Only if the dark has been totally or partially scattered by light, we will realize that the dark doesn't mean a permanent state, and that our target is and it has been the light, and only then we will be penetrated by all the evil of the darkness.

From the state which placed us in the full Revelation, impropriated through faith, we can clearly see what a precious asset is the communion report between man and God, and how abnormal it is the state of the man before having the full Revelation. Only after we believe, we will see our sin from before believing or the one which will remain after we have believed. Before these it is only a vague action, a waiting for something which to save us.

What the full Revelation has given us, as we have it in Jesus Christ? The salvation of the man from curse, the birth of the new man and the killing of the sinful former man, his adoption through God, as the Holy

Scriptures tells us. It is everywhere about the man's accomplishing, which certain impediments were making it impossible through immanent powers. The previous analyzes, have briefly shown us in which direction it stays this fully accomplishing of the man, and which are the states opposite to it. Through the faith, it is born into man the subject of the communion with God and with the fellow humans; through the Christian faith the man is elevated from the natural state to the state of a subject, on this peak which the man is to. Only through the faith into the personal and full God, and through the faith based on the Revelation in Jesus Christ, the man restored is, and this restoration means a commitment of anyone into the struggle of his fellow human's restoration, by communion and by serving. Only through the faith in God as Person, especially in God Who really makes Himself - and for eternity - man, through the report created between us an God, by faith, we are granted a value, which in the same time it is being accomplished in us, and only through it too, we are compelled to see the same value and to accomplish it in each of our fellow human.

The man becomes, through Jesus Christ, a son of God and a fellow human of Jesus Christ-God. It is the highest dignity and state the which the man is elevated to. And, what else it means this but the elevation at the highest intimate *me-you* communion with God? And who stays in communion with God, that one is eternal, for, to whom God loves so much than He welcomes him in communion with Himself, He cannot let him perish, like we wouldn't have let to perish the ones loved by us, if it had been give to our power.

But, the dignity, the superior state of reality and the supreme happiness, in the same time, they are not something else to be artificially added to the human being, for it is reckoned like a rebirth of his. It is the

restoration of the man on the line of his destiny, elevated to its peak.

The man is therefore into an abnormal state before the rebirth through the Christian faith. We call it "state of nature" just because the subject is not yet born in him. But this state of nature will be weird, and will be unnatural, if we have in our sight the target which the man has been destined to. Besides this, it is ascertained that the man in whom subject of the communion is not born yet, he still isn't in the automatic state of the animals, but into a state of perversions and evil. He consciously impedes the subject's birth of his fellow human's subject and his egotism hasn't any limits. Not only that he does not know about the communion but moreover, he is against it. His will and his conscience – which still are not the real subject, the subject of the communion – they stay against his accomplishing and against that of his fellow human, and they stay against the targets which God pursuits for the man. This hostility being a conscious opposition to God, it has the character of a sin, and not only that of a simple imperfect nature. He does not love God, he does not love its fellow humans, and he stands in the way of the targets which God pursuits for the man, and all of these because he loves himself with an egotistic love, namely with a false love. His mind and his will, by staying under the impulse of a too big love for himself, are weakened and falsely oriented. In all regards he sins against God, and the sin against God it is the abomination of the sinner and of his fellow humans. The turning away from God, towards the self like a centre of preoccupations, the getting out from the communion with Him, it automatically brings the man's diving diving into an obscurity of the mind, into a weakening of the will, into an egotistic and tormenting solitude, into a state of numbness of his subject, into an evil spell which paralyzes his powers, like in a fairy tale, or it demotes

him from the state of a man to an animal state. The punishment and the curse are organically comprised into the sin. There exist a supreme order, established not only by will, but based into the tri-personal being of God Himself, whereupon to, the happiness stays into communion, and the lonely egotism it is against the ultimate laws of the reality, and it is an ordeal to the existence. The child, who leaves the parental house and its loving atmosphere, when he is driven by his disobedience, he decays spiritually because of the natural consequence of the things, without to be any longer needed the formal curse of his parents. If one is still speaking about a parental curse, like cause of the decay and of the misfortunes of the son who has gone out from the connections with his parental house, through it will be expressed on one hand the lack of communication state, of the impossibility of the communication, and the pain of the parents for this thing and for the fatality of the sad consequences of which the son will endure, and on the other hand, the fact that the state of lack of communication of the son it means for him depriving the soul's powers which had been continuously received from them, and, even more than a privation, it is a cause of uninterrupted failure and of moral weakening step. If the communion gives powers, if the communion means living according to the laws of the spirit, getting out from community it brings a torment of the being and a gradual exhaustion of powers. All the more accentuated these consequences of the getting out from communion with the godlike Subject are, because the godlike Subject is the absolute source of power and of life.

The restoring of the communion with God and, consequently, of the equilibrium and of the power state of the human being, it cannot be accomplished, however, by himself. Neither will us able to enter the communion with our fellow human if he does not want

that - even less with God. On the other hand, there are no longer within man the moral powers which to make him able to raise himself to the state of communion. The man's wish is a weak intermittent flickering, deprived by any force, and deprived of continuity and profoundness.

Just because of his lack of spiritual power, which to make him able for the communion state, it is necessary not only that the communion initiative to start from God, by coming Him firstly into the maximum closeness to the man, but also the man needs to be shaken, through an unveiling of all his wickedness, by his profound guilt. He must understand what condemnable his sin is like, what guilty he made himself like in front of moral order, how seriously he mocked the basic law of spiritual existence: namely the communion's law. Only on this way he will raise the importance of this law in his conscience, and his longing for communion it will be seriously intensified, and he will receive power to get rid of the inertia of a life into the ethic relaxation and disorder. Therefore it is necessary, for the real restoration of the human being, a reestablishing of the moral prestige of his conscience. The authority of the conscience must grow up in him to become a support to him, on which he can grip with all his strength. Accustomed to despise his conscience - to his bad - he must be awakened by an act of shaking, in order to see all its importance and, related to it, to see all the ignominy which, by disregarding it, he has made himself guilty of. But this doesn't mean else but that the law, which was mocked through his sin, it must get satisfaction, and the sinner suffers a punishment according to the seriousness of his transgression. Put at his place, the man will understand why he wasn't able to offer the necessary satisfaction to moral order and to elevate through his own sufferance out of his decadence, in order to reenter the communion order with God.

It suffices here to highlight that the embodiment of the Son of God took place not only on the purpose that God to come in maximum closeness to the man, but also to give, through substitutive sufferance, that satisfaction to the moral order which to produce into the people's souls the necessities repercussions to theirs real restoration. Therefore, it wasn't sufficient the closeness of God to the man, in order to reestablish the communion, but it was also necessary on this purpose the sacrifice for people.

According to the theory of Anselm of Canterbury, almighty in Catholic theology, the sin of the man, by being an offense brought to God's honor, the sacrifice of His Son was a satisfaction brought to His honor, having as consequence the removal of the death which was hovering like a menace above all people. The sacrifice of Jesus had the meaning of reconciling the love of God, Who wanted to save the people from the punishment of death, and His justice, which couldn't leave unpunished the offense brought to Him. The Son of God made Himself man only to fulfill the juridical form of legal representation of people into the satisfaction brought in their name.

A closeness to the people, like a good in itself, it wasn't needed, because of the man's nature it wasn't broken through sin, but it was only suspended the normal relation between God and people and it was proclaimed on them the doom of death.

Leaving aside the inappropriate appearance which God is described in, by this theory - like being so much preoccupied by His honor -, it is to be noticed that it is not necessary that the love and the justice of God to be considered as to be into a such accentuated opposition in order to explain the death of God for the people. The justice must not be regarded as staying in opposition with the love, as opposing to this one a stubborn veto and as letting itself reconciled only with

the price of a heavy sacrifice. It is rather comprised into the love, whether this is understood not like a heavy sacrifice, but, in a wide sense, like a real will for restoring the human nature. The man cannot be really restored without being shaken through an own sufferance or, because he cannot provide it to himself, through a substitutive sufferance for him. This is the basic structure of his being, into which it mirrors the importance of the moral law emanating from the divine being and will. The simple forgiveness, without this fundamental shaking of him, it cannot be useful to him, and it cannot snatch him out from his moral helplessness.

Thereby, God's love itself, like a love to the end, it must approve the sufferance of the man like a condition of his rebirth, or, because he cannot provide it, in order to pass himself through it, the embodiment of the Son of God it wasn't intended only to give Him the legal quality to represent the people into the removal of a juridical conflict between them and God, but it was itself the beginning of the communion with the people. It wasn't only a passing means in the service of God's love, but it was the supreme showing of the love itself. Through it, God placed Him into the role of the Subject of the communion with the people. But, in order they to be able to place themselves in this report, at His calling, there must be produced their fundamental shaking through the sacrifice which will have to reestablish the moral order's prestige in their conscience.

According to the catholic conception, the human nature, by not being weakened through sin, but only having above it the menace of death, through the juridical satisfaction brought by Jesus Christ, being removed the death from above it, there was accomplished everything that must to be done. But the experience tells us that the human nature is too much damaged by the sin and that through the

juridical act done by Jesus Christ with His face towards the Father, the human nature hasn't been yet pulled out from its misery. There is necessary a continuous work upon it, because death is not something external, but in it, like a spiritual weakness which gradually crumbles the human nature. Jesus Christ made him man in order to permanently stay with His face towards the people while communicating through love His restoration powers, and this powers are overwhelming the people with the supreme intensity only when they know about His sacrificed committed for them.

For the nature's restoration to its normal state, namely in the communion state, it was a death which to shake the earth and the heavens to the ground, for a universal spiritual earthquake to be the beginning of a new form of existence of the creature who derailed from its path. Instead of destroying the disfigured creation (or of letting it to disorganize and to become totally exhausted), God preferred this death which supra-equated through the earthquake produced by it, an echo of the universal death abyss. The death of the creation was substituted for the death of the One Who comprised in summary the whole created world, by giving to this death a more shaking echo than the death can give it to the world.

In the same time, this lonely death could have the renewal efficacy for the un-destroyed creation. The death of the Son of God - the embodied One -, it was the explosion of an unlimited source of love and of spiritual power, overflowing like the burning lava into all un-hardened consciences and transforming them from ground up. The sufferance for the other one it is the most accentuated launch of the own power towards him. This sufferance, through its definition, it breaks the limits of the self of the one who suffers, by getting with a conqueror moral power into the one for

whom he suffers. The sufferance for the other it is a power which is not only into the one who suffers, but between him and the one for whom he suffers, by bonding them both into a unity. This one it is the most important ring of the communion chain. It is everywhere an explosion of power from the one who suffers, with the goal to attract the aimed ones into the sphere of a new life, of a life in communion. But the death of the Man-God it was an explosion from the abyssal centre of the existence, which outpoured His spiritual loving power on the range of the entire humanity, by burning with supreme intensity and efficacy. The Blood of the godlike Lamb, which does not ended ever to flow and to be imparted, it has a real cleansing power, upon all the ones who are imparted with It.

The re-creator earthquake, caused by His sacrificial death, it propagates like a permanent actuality for and into every man who comes to the conscience of this sacrifice which holds in it the entire world until its end. On each day and, especially in the moment of the Holy Eucharist, the Christian lives the actualization of this quake, shuddered by the size of the sacrifice which must to be brought for him and under his power breaks the decayed shape of his being and he catches the new consistency. Into an uninterrupted moan for the own sin, which upholds us to continuous seeing His blood which we are imparted with, a moan which comprises, in the same time, the joy of the salvation, as well as the thank brought to God for the sacrifice which He has escaped us through, it is effected the salvation of each new generation of people that comes into the world. Without tears for our sins, without the crying of the repentance, we won't be saved, but this crying is mixed with the certitude of the salvation and it becomes to us a possibility, through the death of the God-Man.

The world is being created again through a

continuous sufferance, which is an uninterrupted killing of its old form, or better said, a continuous forcing over its superficial and obdurate structure, in order to renew it. It is not vainly considered that the baptism is a mysterious death and revival, and the repentance is reckoned as a baptism which must be repeated each time the man falls into sin. The Christian dies on every instant of the world and he resurrects in the communion with Christ. In the same act he does the experience of the former man's death and of the resurrection like a new man. We are "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifested in our body.", said Saint Paul (II Co: 4: 10).

The Son of God has created or, better said, He has re-created the world, through His death, put at the basis of this re-creation at which fulfillment we are called to participate to. This time the calling has been done through sufferance, in which pulsed the same endless force through which He created the world for the first time. Adapting a word of Saint John Chrysostom, we can say that the re-creation of the world, in a certain sense, it is harder even than creating it for first time, because it is harder to be healed a spiritual nature that has slipped on the slope of the decay, than to be created a new one⁷⁶. The only creative force it is in general the sufferance, which defeats the old structure, not to eradicate it, but

⁷⁶ "The conservation of the world, said Saint John Chrysostom, it isn't an inferior stage of its creation, but, if we must say something wonderful, it is even superior to it. It means a lot to produce something out of nothing; but to conserve those things, which tend towards inexistence, and to keep them together, when they want to spread away, it is a big and wonderful deed and a sign of lot of power". Omil. II Ebr. 1, 3 Cf. H. Andrutsos, *The Dogmatic* in Romanian translation, p. 126 – 7.

to renew it.

Like Jesus through His death He has transposed Himself, as man, outside the created existence, which was weakened by sin, in order to receive it in a renewed form like through a new creation, from God's hands, the same must be repeated by us, through the spirit's repentance intensity: this death, by getting out from the world's field, and from the actual shape of creation, in order to reach at Jesus Christ (He: 13: 13), so that, with the experience that we are on the edge of the nonentity, to the experience the receiving the new existence from the power and for the mercy of God. Properly-said, not in the field of the world in which we are, we are preserve our life - as it seems to us -, but by getting out of it, by losing what it seems to us as being life. Life in the actual shape of the creation it is a disfigurement of life, it is a life which implacable progresses towards death. Only by exiting from this state of illness, and by placing us on the edge of the existence, in front of God, we will regain our life. But the one who has made the decisive step in this direction, by accepting to lose this life in order to resurrected in the new one and, by this, to attract all of us with a supreme force towards the "grave" of the new life: it is Jesus Christ⁷⁷.

Thereby, whether through embodiment, God does not came into a maximum closeness forever and ever, through the death on the cross followed by His resurrection, He has snatched us off from the spiritual death in which we were, and He has raised us to the capacity of the communion, of which basis He has put through His embodiment. His sacrifice has so much claiming power upon us, that it kidnaps us from the

⁷⁷ "To us, who through stupidity altered the existence, He accepted to make Himself resembling to us, so what had fallen outside of existence, He to re-bring it to existence". Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *De vita Mosis*, P. G. 44, 381 B., W. c. p. 113.

state of spiritual numbness, and it brings us with it outside of this obdurate existence, where we meet Him eye to eye, like God. And this means the new Life. Golgotha is by consequence, the last step of the loving movement of the God towards people. Through it is consummated God's communion with us.

Understood like this, the crucifixion of the Lord has, in the same time, the meaning to give satisfaction to the moral order by springing out from the divine will, and to deeply re-make, even through this, the human being. The love towards man, which He wants to truly remake, to not give him only an external forgiveness, an ineffective one, made the Son of God not only to embody Himself, but also to receive the death on the cross. If it is proven here also the divine justice, it won't necessarily stay apart from love, but it will be comprised into love, understood in a wide sense, like a will to reestablish the man's life in an effective way. The Eastern Fathers, who explain Lord's death on cross, mainly through love, penetrated more deeply into the Mystery of being of God and of the man.

IV. 2. The Law – a Pedagogue towards Christ

After we have briefly clarified us, from the content of our Christian belief, what God has given us or what He will give us, through Jesus Christ, what targets God pursues with the man, we can now return, for a moment, back to the prophets and to their law, in order to why they and their activity weren't sufficient to the fulfillment of these goals, and why the Revelation mediated by them it wasn't enough?

The prophets gave the man the faith, as certitude about the existence of God, and they communicated the will of God. The man had felt God being interested in his destiny also for He sent His commandments. But

the fact that God sent His commandments, but He didn't give any power to fulfill them, it showed the man the distance which God kept from him. The prophet, by the fact that he was a man who spoke about God like about something different from him, and by the fact that the prophet was simply transmitting the commandments of God, without being able to help the man to fulfill these commandments, he contributed, also, to the confirmation of the conscience that God it is faraway. God appeared to the man like One Who, by keeping Himself at distance, He sends His commandments, saying to him: you fulfill them. The man felt himself alone and left to his own powers, which were insufficient to the pretensions of God. Even if he could fulfilled the commandments, he still wouldn't have had God closer. In reality, he can fulfill certain commandments of civilian nature, juridical and moral, but the main commandment, namely to enter the communion with God and, by this, with his fellow humans, he couldn't fulfill it without the descent of God to him. The laws which the man can fulfill are the crumbs, the external shells, the surrogates of the big law of the communion. Through them it is sketched the necessity of the communion, it is expressed the desire for it, but it is not realized. A man asks to the other one, when he is not in communion with him, to fulfill some deeds like they would be in communion, but himself cannot achieve that until descends himself to that man. All the more it cannot be realized the communion with God until He does not descend to the man. The communion is accomplished through the descent of the one who is superior in spirit, in loving power, in understanding, to the inferior one, and not through the ascent of the inferior to the superior one. By the fact that the superior one still gives some commandments to the inferior one, like a surrogate of the communion, like an insufficient substitution of it, that one shows that he does not want to break any

connection with the man, but he aims to reestablish it. Those commandments are another grace, they are a benevolence. The law deficiently kept the place of the communion, until its accomplishment. The Law was the shadow, it was the foreshadowing of what was to come. The law created a waiting regime, a tension towards completeness, and it was in the same time a promise. The father will be severe with his child after the child has made serious mistakes. So severe, than it will seem to the child that his father treats him like a servant. This report has something from the severity of the report master-servant. The communion from before is no longer there. But the present severity is provisionally, the child feels it like a passing stage towards the new filial communion and, therefore, he endures it waiting for that one⁷⁸. Through the Law, God didn't let the man to totally decay, forsaken in the bondage of Egypt, but He carried the man through the hardships of the desert towards the promised communion of Canaan. By giving the law, God made a Covenant with the people from before Christ, the Covenant of the Promise. The ones from under the Law walked into the hope of the things from the future. The commandments are the exterior faces of the real communion - the future one.

The Law does not allow the man to totally forget about God, about his obligations towards Him, like the civilian laws do not allow him to disregard and annul the reality of others. The Law puts through fear, through force, bridle to the egocentrism, and it maintains a minimum of communion. The laws between people are a complex of reciprocal breaks of

⁷⁸ Through Jesus Christ, God unveils again His parental face towards people. The man becomes again the son of God; the man, who was deprived of his good Father, he is now again the son of God, and God is again his Father, said Saint Gregory of Nyssa, P. G. 45, 889 A-H, Cf. J. Aufhauser, W. c. p. 116.

the egotisms. They are the more severe and they ask the much less, the more the state of selfishness it is developed.

The laws are good, but they are insufficient. They indicate towards the big law of love, in which they comprise unitary and consummately. But because the love cannot be realized by man without the descent of God, neither the laws can be respected but forcedly, having to be increasingly many, by giving a rising sphere to the egotisms. Only who lives into love, he fulfills all the laws. The Love, the communion, it is the consummation of the Law.

Until there comes the reality towards which the laws indicate, in their exterior and fragmentary manner, the man under their regime he feels his sinfulness, from his conscience and, especially, for accomplishing the target which they indicate towards, the total leaving of the egotism and entering the communion. The laws, through them, they grow up the conscience of the ethical incapacity. Through this the man lives into the tension of the waiting for the divine help. From under the law, the man, in a necessary way, he looks towards a future époque, which to exceed the law. The law claims a surpassing, an abolition by filling up of the scheme and the gesture sketched by them.

As the law is an unconsummated closeness of God, a draft of His will to embody Himself, a foretelling of the Bethlehem, as the Old Testament sacrifices are a foretelling of Golgotha, expressing on one hand the necessity of an expiatory sacrifice for the sin of the man in front of God, and on the other hand, their insufficiency to accomplish what it is sketched in them like intention. Being instituted by the God's command, but insufficient, they manifest the will of God to help to produce at once the true expiatory sacrifice, consequently being signs of the divine covenant, reasons for confidence and waiting. They were the

anticipation of the permanent quake, which will have to take over the human generations through the Golgotha's sacrifice. The shed blood of the animals from the Old Testament it symbolized the necessity of the destruction of the creation in the actual form, in order to be remade into a new shape. Spraying with that blood, the defiled ones in order to "sanctify" them (Hebr. 9, 13), it was prefigured the necessity for the people to be imparted with true purifying blood, like a participation with the own being to the destruction of the One Who sacrificed Himself for them and to His resurrection. Through this act from the Old Testament it was foreseen the communion with Christ Who sacrifices Himself, a communion which, like a repercussion into the intimate spiritual plan, it means staggering repentance, birth giver to a new being and, by this, a victory over the walls of the egotism and entering the direct communion experienced with Jesus Christ, namely Resurrection.

Like the sacrifice of Jesus Christ it consummates the communion between us and God, initiated through embodiment, likewise the Old Testament's sacrifices were completing the Law on their way, standing on a line with it.

The view of the insufficiency of the law and of the sacrifices, the discontent with them, not by mutiny, but by the moral helplessness which they highlighted and maintained, it was growing up. When I've said that the prophets transmitted the law, I added that also the prophets were showing the insufficiency of the law, prophesying about Messiah, like a positive preparation of people to welcome Jesus Christ. And, as the time was passing, and the laws were multiplied and they showed their insufficiency, the prophets showed they increasingly discontent with the regime of the Law and they were foretelling about the Fulfiller. By this, they unveiled also their insufficiency into the Revelation of

God, and to the salvation of the people.

Under the reign of the Law, the time is not uniform, but it has a development. In fact it is not about the time, but about the mankind, because the time is not an empty scheme in which are arranged the man's deeds and moods, and his states of mind like objects into the space, but it is the chaining of these deeds and states itself. And because the total of the life of a man it is determined and it determines the one of the other people, the complexity of the states and human deeds, namely the time, it becomes different on each step, by flowing together countless immanent influences and mysterious transcendental causes.

This complexity had under the Law the general development which we've spoken about. It was progressing on this way until *it was filled up with all the conditions*, which made understood and necessary the descending of the Son of God on earth. This was "the fullness of time".

This expression doesn't mean "at the established term" on the line of a formal time, an unqualified one. It means the general state of the soul, filled up by the conditions needed for receiving of integral Revelation; only due to this fact, that moment is also a "established term". If this expression meant simply a fixed term, it would be legitimate the question: why God established it so late?

While in the meaning of the "filled time", we understand that it is required a certain development, a certain accumulation of experience from the part of the mankind, until it starts suffering the state of non-communion in which it is with God, to ardently wishing the state of the communion and to definitively realizing the insufficiency of the Law, namely the insufficiency of his own powers to fulfill the Law. The man, like a limb of the society, he arrives to certain views and understandings on the basis of the gradually gained experiences. This is the law of the growth and of

the fulfilling of the human soul. God does not annul the human soul; if that had been the case, the man would have not been a man and God would have annulled the creation.

“The fullness of time” it means negatively that the man was filled by the finding of his insufficiency, and positively by the sentiment of the necessity of God’s help. The man is in the state of the one who waits for and tensely begs: “Come, God”. This sense is completed with the one of moment, which could be filled with the presence of God. “The fullness of time”, like an exact point in time, it is not an anterior moment to the conception of the Son of God from Virgin Mary, but it coincides with this fact. Exactly into the instant of the fullness of time Jesus descended into time. The time was “filled up” through historical development from the part of the man and though the descending of God. The “filled up time” is the supreme tension moment in waiting, but it is also of the satisfaction of this waiting, of its overcoming in accomplishing of the promise. If that supreme moment of waiting had not been satisfied by the descending of God, there it wouldn’t have had the character of “fullness of time”. Thus, “the fullness of time” means also the moment starting from which we have a time full of God, whereas His Son has become man and He remains man forever, by living the time with us, by filling up the time, or the human life’s flowing complexity, with the supreme reality, with the supreme ennobling power. The time from before Christ, it was not full with this presence. God fulfilled and helped only from distance. It was felt a certain void in time⁷⁹. Now we do not feel it anymore. Now it is a

⁷⁹ With no matter how much agitation and human pretense would be filled the time up, you feel what empty it is like, what monotonous it is like, when there isn’t in it but only that. Everything the man does, only like a man, it is shallow, it is only appearance and vainglorious photography. Everything is

perpetual feast because this is the sense and this is the experience we make into the feast: the fullness of divine presence, so, of happiness and shininess⁸⁰. Only now the time is full with its sense and value, for the life gains value in time only through the embodiment of God in time.

In order to insist a little more upon the human aspect of the fullness of time, it is necessary to say that the man could not tell exactly what he expects God to fulfill his insufficiencies and longings like. He felt vaguely that for this it is necessary God to be closer than through the prophets and to be a communion's God, not a God of the commandments. God knew however that this thing cannot be done better, or more consummately, than through His embodiment and sacrifice.

chaff which burns without any meaning into the fire of a serious regard, of a realistic one. The whole history is a meaningless writhing. Until you enter the chamber of the communion with your fellow human, to whom you grant a non-passing reality, everything is futility. "Nothing has to tell us so much like the history, but it also hasn't to tell us nothing decisively... History like a state it doesn't know fulfillment, but only the aspiration towards it" (Brunner, *der Mitteln*, p. 270-1). "The History is, about its being, the one which can't reach its goal. Because it is constantly moving in this part of the trench, which separates the man from his goal and origin. Where this trench is crossed over..., there the "time if full". (Brunner, *W. c.* p. 272). We agree Brunner's idea that this filling up of the history it means also the destruction of it, we agree.

⁸⁰ Hochzeit, Vollzeit – these words are used by Germans to name the time of supreme joy: the wedding - to the consummate communion.

V.

THE EMBODIMENT OF THE SON OF GOD

V. 1. The Hypostatic Union or, A Subject in Two Natures

The man needs for his salvation that God to come as close as possible to him, not to only be sending commandments which he cannot fulfill, but to enter the communion with him, and the Holy Trinity wants to reestablish the communion with the people and among people, a mission which especially falls to the Son due to the place He has into the Holy Trinity like a hypostatic intentionality for communion, and carried by the joy of obligation, of the serving, first towards the Father and, therefore – in order to please the Father - towards people, for bringing them again in the state of His sons.

What could the Son of God to the man could come closer to the man like? The closest reality to the man is his fellow human whom the man stays in communion with. In nature the man will feel himself stranger if he hasn't a fellow human. The nature is mute, it is not capable to communicate its intimacies. Actually, the nature doesn't even have any intimacies.

The nature isn't the way God speaks clearly to the man in, neither intimately. Closer to the man it is the being, which is like him and which can communicate in a generally human language, what it has like him.

It is insufficient, for this maximum closeness, only the simple dwelling of the Son of God into a man. The one who, in this case moves directly among people He is a man. The ones who call Him as *you*, they do not call like as Son of God. The Son of God remains, somehow, behind this man, like a third person. He does not directly tell His word to the people, but His word is repeated by the one in whom He is dwelling, so

that the people's ears are reached by the word of a man, even though the content and the certitude are from God.

The Nestorianism, which argues a godlike person and a human one into Jesus Christ, does not correspond to the will towards communion manifested from the part of God and from the part of the man. The Nestorianism stops God at the half of the road on which He has gone driven by His love. The Christendom is not representing only a message sent by God, but it represents God Himself, like He entered the world, like object of the revelation. God is a subject and also the Revelation's object. He shows Himself, He gives Himself, He communicates Himself, He makes Himself content of the *me-you* relationship with the people, while remaining, in the same time, a subject of this communication and of this relationship that He established.

There does not exist Jesus in Himself like man, who then to receive later the attribute of a revelator too, but this Jesus is God Himself like a subject of the Revelation and like an object of it too⁸¹.

There is not a pure closeness, neither a presence of God around the man. The majesty imposes a distance. A king, if He descends in all His shininess among the poor people, in order to establish a communication between Him and they, the fear will keep the souls of the people under lock. A descent of God in His entire splendor it would overwhelm, it would blind the people, and it would restrain them to move freely. And God wants to gain them through their liberty, through their voluntary decision. This is the faith. He does not want to force the people to accept Him through the almighty

⁸¹ KARL BARTH, *Die kirchliche Dogmatik*, I. Band: Die Lehre vom Wort Goettles, I. Halbbad, München, 1932, p. 433: „Es gibt keinen Jesus an sich, der dann vielleicht auch das Prädikat eines Trägers jener Offenbarung... bekommen konnte“.

violence which He imposes Himself with. If that has been the case, the communion wouldn't have been accomplished. The man must elevate himself at the communion from his inside, this being his true growth. From outside it comes only the help through calling, through incentive, through love, and the help according to the liberty of the man.

Besides this, an unveiled presence of God nigh to the man, in case it is not a force to overwhelm him, it is indistinguishable, inaccessible, inconceivable to the human powers. It is a faraway God, no matter how close will Him be. Because not through the spatial distance is Him faraway from man, but through His existence onto ontological plans which are inconsistent with the intimation power of the man. From the nonphysical realities, the man cannot have direct experience but only about his own subject and other people's subjects. Only the subjects of his fellow humans represent, beyond him, a distinguishable ontological plan, an objectified one, for him. Until here has the Son of God to descend in order to be really close but though not to restrain the free unveiling of the man's life.

In order to fulfill these two conditions God neither used a camouflage under human appearance, into a Monophysite sense. That wouldn't have been a real descent of God onto the human subject's ontological objectified plan. The Son of God's human appearance wouldn't have been in such a case a real man, equal partner to the man in communion. The distance it would have remained. God had wanted to overcome the distance, otherwise He wouldn't have resorted either to its illusory exceeding. The man also wants it removed, but it can be really annulled. The problem of the maximum closeness between God and man it has not received a solution, but only an apparent solution, a covering of the distance through an illusion. Besides

that, the Nestorianism means the belief into the impossibility of really exceeding the abyss which separates God from creation, and the Monophysitism accepts such an exceeding only with the condition of merging the creation into God.

Neither the second side from the whole of the action salvation of can be done through the Nestorian and Monophysite thwarting of the embodiment. Carried by His eternal obligation towards the Father, the Son wants to bring also the people to this state, which is in the same time the one of the communion with the Holy Trinity. People cannot elevate to this state by themselves, since they have got out from the communion with God, and since they have become unable for this communion. So they cannot fulfill the eternal law, which is also of their being, the law of obligation towards the Father. Through everything they don't do, they are not able to arise to communion, therefore they cannot be helped, but through His maximum closeness to them, through communion. The accomplishing of this law, of the true worship and serving in love of the Father, it cannot be fulfilled for people except by a man who hasn't got out, because of his sin, from the communion with God. And He does it, by carrying the obligation, by the renouncing to the self, by the Self sacrifice to the ultimate limit, by dying a voluntary death in the most dreadful way. The maximum awakening of the communion subject it cannot be accomplished but through the sacrifice for him. So that, the death of Christ for people it cumulates in itself the effect of the maximum preparation of people for the communion with Him and, by this, with God, with the accomplishing of the law of the man's obligation to worship the Father.

If the Son of God didn't made Himself man in the whole sense of the word, the man wouldn't have been able to be reconciled with God, because the path of the law accomplishment, which is in the same time the one

started from the state of communion towards the communion accomplishing and towards the adoption, it couldn't have been initiated, or even less it could have been finished⁸².

All these things show us that the Son of God does not came only into man, like a content of the man, but He made Himself what directly welcomes us in every fellow human, a human subject of communion, what speaks to us from man, a person, an intentionality for communion, and having all the real support of the man into his concrete countenance, into Jesus Christ, Who was telling *Me*, and to Whom the people around Him were calling Him as *You*, and Who wasn't a human subject differing from the godlike one, but He was the godlike subject descended and objectified in state and in function as human subject. God made Himself to us *You*, on the level of our self, a *You* Whom to dare to behave with like with every man. This you from within our fellow human it is all that can be closer to us, the only reality which we can enter a loving communion with. From the furthest, God has made Himself the closest One to us. Only by making Himself a human you to us, He directly has spoken to us, so that we have entered the direct relation with His Person. Only on this way the human person of Jesus was the godlike Person of the Son. In the same time, only by being the one and the same person both

⁸² Neither the descent of the Logos like another reality than the divine one, it wouldn't have been the revelation of God. "Als Verwandlung des Wortes in eine von Gott verschiedene Wirklichkeit könnte die Fleischwerdung des Wortes offenbar nicht Gottes Offenbarung sein, ebenso wenig wie wenn an Ohre Stelle eine unmittelbare Erscheinung der unsichtbaren Herrlichkeit Gottes Ereignis geworden wäre", **K. BARTH**, Die kirchliche Dogmatik, 1938, I. Band, II. Halbband, p. 43.

God and man, Jesus has brought his life like a substitutive sacrifice for people, but that sacrifice was no longer only that of a man and having only a relative effect.

The Church has established this amazing deed of love of the Son of God towards us, into a dogmatic formula as concise and as rigid as possible (the elasticity and the prolixity are dangerous when they are at the reach of a big crowd; moreover, the dogma is not destined to be preached in its formula; the formula is only a guidance), so much correct, superhuman and wholly comprehensive. The formula of the Ecumenical Synod from Chalcedon tells us: "We confess the One and the same Son, Lord, Jesus Christ, full God a full man, recognized in two natures united in undivided manner, not separated, unmixed, the difference of the natures not being disbanded because of the union, but each of the two natures keeping its features and flowing together into a Person and into a Hypostasis". According to this formula, the Subject is one into Jesus Christ and the natures are two. The communion in two natures in Jesus Christ has been called as hypostatic union, through hypostasis being understood, in the first place, the entirety of a reality – in our case the two natures forming a whole – and then the personal principle, because the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity are called as Hypostases.

The question is, what consists in, more precisely, the person unlike the natures? The person is not a part of nature, because the dogma tells us that nothing from the human nature is missing in Jesus Christ, nor the soul, neither the reason, nor the will. Driven by these general indications, Leontius of Byzantium and John Damascene saw the subject, the person, into the godlike Word, into Logos. This One, by having like the godlike nature as His from eternity, He has impropriated the human nature too, by making Himself a subject to it too. The human nature from within

Jesus Christ it does not stand by itself, like a whole sufficient to itself and rounded in itself, in which case it would have formed a hypostasis, but, since the moment which it has started to form in, it stays in Logos, having Him like support.

This is the theory of en-hypostasis, mentioned by Leontius from Byzantium⁸³. The general teaching becomes thus the idea that “the unique subject into Christ is the Logos, which has embodied Himself, namely He has impropriated the human body and everything related to his humanity”⁸⁴.

Two conclusions can be drawn out of this teaching. The first one, is that the subject not only isn't a part of the nature, but, by and large, the subject isn't anything else but the nature's form of standing by itself. The human nature, by not standing in it, but in Logos, it has this form together with Him, together with His nature, by forming together a hypostasis, though before the embodiment the Logos existed exclusively like a divine hypostasis.

This interpretation has the advantage that it really saves the man into Jesus Christ. The difficulty is that it seems not applicable to the Holy Trinity, where the human being stays only one time but though there are Three Hypostases.

Another conclusion which was deducted before, it is that the subject has an own reality, being different from nature, and being something else than the simple self existence of the nature. This conclusion was drawn by S. Bulgakov. According to him, the subject is that mysterious ghost, which cannot by any means

⁸³ OSKAR BENSON, *Die Lehre von den Kenose*, Leipzig, 1903, p. 12-13.

⁸⁴ In these expressions summarizes, for example K. Jüssen, the doctrine of Hesychios from Jerusalem: “Die dogmatischen Anschauungen des Hesychios von Jerusalem, Münster in West, 1931, p. 127.

be determined, but like owner and manipulator of all the discernable features and parts which compose the human nature. The cogitation is also nature, the will is the same, because when I am saying: "I cogitate", "I" is beyond of the cogitation, it is the subject, the owner of cogitation, of what, when I am speaking in the first person, I can put it in the accusative. It is the last unseen agent, from the backstage, of the nature. It is uncreated, while the nature is created. The subject's place into Jesus Christ it has been taken by the Logos, Who, in front of the divine nature He has the same situation like our self in front of the human nature, and by human nature He doesn't differ but gradually, because the human self is a divine speck, while the Logos is a divine Hypostasis. The human nature does not endure any catastrophe through the substitution of the own self with the Logos, for also the divine essence are one and another. It is in the human nature's destiny to be carried out by a divine subject⁸⁵.

Bulgakov was influenced in this teaching, somehow, by the great Protestant theologian G. Thomasius⁸⁶. But while that one kept himself in between some limits, by not daring to declare the personal principle itself from within the divine man, but only a certain power from

⁸⁵ Agnetz Bojii, Ymca Press, Paris, 1933.

⁸⁶ **G. THOMASIUS** says: "The man carry in him a ghost of life emanated from God, which it is the immanent foundation of his personality. Not the personality itself: because the personality is wholly on the created side of his life and it is possible only through that it is dwelt in that godlike *πνεῦμα*". "Ein Beitrag zur kirchlichen Christologie", in Zeitschrift für Protestantismus und Kirche, B. IX, 1845, p. 229. Quote from Oskar Benson, Die Lehre von der Kenose, p. 43. „The human nature characteristic stays, like it was observed, in that it has a divine reason of life (einen göttlichen Lebensgrund in sich trägt). But the same thing it is valid also for the Savior, of whom reason of life (Lebensgrund) it is the Logos", W. c. p. 238, at Benson, W. c. p. 46.

its basis, Bulgakov brought the theory to extreme, so that he fell a direct pantheism.

The problem is, without any doubt, so full of mystery, that nobody has found yet answer it and to illuminate it. It can only be circumscribed more closely; there can be achieved some progresses towards its core of unsearchable mystery, but illuminating it in itself it is impossible. The man does not know yet what person factor is in itself. Even harder it is to pronounce over the modality of substitution of this factor.

We are satisfied, for this reason, with the following general indications, remaining aside of the explanations give by Leontius from Byzantium, Maximos the Confessor, and John Damascene. The nature or the substance is the material, the content which a reality consists of. It is, for instance, the wood which a table consists of, the blood which the living body consists of, or the spirituality which the interior man consists of. For this, it also means what is common to all individuals or things belonging to the same species⁸⁷.

The hypostasis is that something which a reality consist of, rounded like a whole which has its support in itself. The hypostasis is not but the way to be like a whole by itself, rounded in itself, with own support, of the substance or of the nature. It is not an admixture of content, of material, to what the nature or the substance are. A wooden matter, rounded in the whole called as table, it has become hypostasis; the material and the spiritual matter which the man consists of, rounded into an individual whole, it becomes a hypostasis too. Thus, we look at the concrete man as

⁸⁷ Dr. **FRANZ ERDIN**, *Das Wort Hypostase, Seine Bedeutungsgeschichtliche Entwicklung in der altchristlichen Literatur bis zum Abschluss trinitarischen Auseinandersetzungen*, Fr. i. Br., 1939, p. 32-33.

being both nature - skin, blood, and spirituality - and hypostasis. The last one is not something more in addition to nature, but the nature itself in an individual shape, standing by itself. The nature alone is not yet hypostasis, but, even the hypostasis is not equal to the nature or to a part of it, neither is an admixture to nature, of the same kind with it, but a nature's way of existence.

Since the nature has the shape of a whole, it have not been a simple propagation environment for some movements started from other points of the vaster whole which it comprises in, but it has its own movements, and its particular destiny. Every whole it has its centre in itself. The extraction of a substance from the vaster ensemble, its rounding up into an individual whole, it has like a consequence the emergence of a centre into this whole. The center of the substance part rounded into a whole it isn't anymore into the vaster ensemble which it has been taken from, but into this new whole.

This phenomenon of emergence of a supreme substance, of a centre of the movements into the nature rounded like whole, it is observed into a categorical and complete way at the human being, which consists of conscious and volunteer nature. At the man, we can clearly see that the hypostasis does not mean only the rounding of the nature into a whole, but also the capacity of this environment of spontaneous movements. The hypostatic whole receives virtues of subject, of activity planned by himself from his center⁸⁸.

⁸⁸ These two characteristics of the hypostasis are distinguished also H. Urs von Balthasar, exposing, on the basis of Saint Maxim the Confessor's Christology, the report between **being** and **hypostasis**. "The hypostasis, especially into the creatural domain, the state of itself of a one, namely, that something which a concrete being distinguishes through from others belonging to the same species", Kosmische Liturgie, Maximos

One could say: these virtues of spontaneous movements and activities are characteristic also to the human nature, through its liberty and its conscience, so not through its rounding into a hypostasis. But if we imagine that the nature from a human hypostasis is

der Bekenner: Höhe und Krise des griechischen Weltbildes, Fr. i. Br., 1941, p. 211. "But it truly comprises over this that active impropriation of which result is the individual" (pg. 213). If we imagine a general nature, repeating itself into many particular countenances, and these having in addition to the commune characteristics of the species also their particular features, these yet aren't hypostasis, because hypostasis is something that cannot be characterized through features which are part of the «existential features» - which distinguish the species - and the «hypostatic features», which refer to the individual as such: for example, the shape of the nose or the color of the hair. But the last ones remain only a sign and a clue for that something which stands alone and which stays at the back of the whole and which still belongs to the nature's order" (p. 213). "That's why the hypostasis can be described only approximately like being formed by two sides, which round up reciprocally: from the side of nature and of its properties which delimit increasingly tightly and from the side of the act, of the impropriation of this nature" (p.214). "The coordinated structure of the being and of the concrete wearer it opens the look over the non-identity between the being order end the order of the concrete existence" (die Nichtidentität von Wesensordnung und Daseinsordnung, p. 215). Maximus the Confessor said: "As the work refers to the one who works, likewise the nature refers to hypostasis". "This report involves, of course, on the one hand a restraint of something general into something particular; it is a concentration". But it is "a concentration bonded to a possession, to a way to be an owner of the being. This report is the cause due to which on one hand it is impossible to cogitate a hypostasis without nature, and on the other hand no nature coincides with its hypostasis; this two notions excludes each - other all the way to the inside of the divinity" (p. 212).

part a vaster whole, from a huge man, the spontaneity and the self-determination won't start from the restraint region as much as the nature of a ordinary man would comprise it in the frame of that huge entity, but it will start from the centre of the whole. So, only as the big nature of the huge whole it would be apportioned into smaller wholes, one could ascertain what these groups form like, into their inside, their spontaneity centre, by gaining subject virtues. It is true that not the hypostasis brings the liberty and the conscience into the rounded whole of a human nature. The Church saw rightly when it condemned the Monothelite, who were saying that into Jesus, being only one hypostasis, there is only one will and one work, by arguing in front of them that each nature preserves its own will and its own work. But the manifestation of the will and of the work it is directed by the hypostatical centre, it is set into movement from the rounded nature like a whole. "In any work the fundamental act belongs to the nature, only the fulfillment of the act it belongs to the person"⁸⁹.

⁸⁹ **H. URS VON BALTHASAR**, op. c., doing the exegesis of Saint Maxim the Confessor, Migne, P. G., 91, 292 D – 293 A; 91, 48 A – B. Saint Maxim the Confessor said: "It isn't the same thing with the possibility to want and to want. Like the possibility to speak isn't the same thing with the speaking. Somebody has permanently the capacity to speak. But he doesn't speak permanently. So that, the possibility to speak permanently, it belongs to nature; but how the hypostasis speaks... The capacity to speak had it the Word embodied like man, but this capacity was moved and it received a shape by His Godlike will". (P. G. 91, 48 A – B). "Is not the same thing to want and to want in certain way". "Like neither is to watch and to watch in a certain way... To want and to look belongs to the nature... To want and to look in a certain way, namely, to want to walk and to not want to walk or to look to the right or to the left, or up or down, it is a way to use the will and the look, own only by who uses them, which distinguishes him by others", P. G. 292 D – 293 B.

Of course, the human nature cannot be rounded in a natural way into other wholes but into the common human individuals. It tends, in other words, towards a determined hypostatic state. In the human nature there is, like a potentiality, the human hypostasis how we know it and, so, also the spontaneity virtues, the ones of subject. The human nature reaches, on the basis of an internal law, the duplicated state of hypostasis–nature, of subject–object. In each man there is the hypostasis and the nature, the first one like subject, the second one like object and instrument, without the hypostasis being an admixture from outside, but the necessary shape which the nature reaches at, as soon as it exists in fact. Into the sentence “I warm myself”, I express both my quality as subject and also as object, both the hypostasis and my nature. The same double aspect I express into the sentence “I cogitate”, whereas I make a distinction between the cogitation subject from inside me and the act of cogitation joined together with the ideas I am cogitating at. The body parts, the states of the conscience, the sentiments, all I can express and name from me, that is nature. The subject is the agent which I cannot determine, on which I can put my finger, which lies behind the curtains that moves them, the only ones that I see. Just because we cannot determine and we give to it a name, we are using for it a word which takes place of a name, a pronoun, says S. Bulgakov (*Tragödie der Philosophie*, Darmstadt, 1927).

But, while S. Bulgakov considered this agent, or *me*, like an entity differing from nature, we consider him only a new aspect, a new way to be emerged from the virtuality of the nature⁹⁰.

⁹⁰ **S. BULGAKOV**, considering the subject like a mysterious reality apart from nature, got close to Monothelites, to whom, according to H. Urs von Balthasar, W. c. p. 254 – 255: “the person was an irrational dimension beyond all it is nature”.

The human nature, therefore, it cannot concretely ever exist only like nature, like object, like instrument, but it always exists like subject-object in the same time, like a revelator agent, and like a revelation environment.

But, in a natural way, the subject aspect it also has it through its particular rounding into the common human individual⁹¹.

Besides, “the Monothelism is, in a certain regard, a precursor of the personalist nominalism from Middle Age and from the modern time. If the person is something else than the center of nature rounded in itself, than, being the factor who works, and this work no more being only a “centralization of the work”, but coming from beyond nature, it won’t be admitted anymore that into Jesus Christ - a single Person and two natures – there are two works, but only one. The human nature widowed of its work and will, it becomes a marionette, a phantom. The Monothelism conducts to Docetism and it is characterized, in general, through a despising of the human nature, arriving to the to consider the embodiment as useless.

⁹¹ In amazing similar terms described this report between nature and *self*, the most modern researcher of the human soul, Ludwig Klages. For him the life and the spirit from the man are the nature, and the *self* it is the subject, but not like an entity apart by the nature, but only like a centre which emerge from the both togetherness. “Into *self* haven’t be searched something else, he says, but the rotation centre strictly indivisible of both”, of life and spirit. (... “es muss davor bewahrt, im Ich etwas anderes zu suchen als den streng unteilbaren Drehpunkt beider”). „To use a palpable comparison: the *self* reports towards his bearer like the rotation embodiment. “In order to use a palpable comparison: the self related to his bearer like the axis of the Earth related to the terrestrial globe, but not like a iron rod which we would introduce through the middle of a sphere to give it an axis, a rod which can be separated from the sphere. The *self* it isn’t neither spirit nor life, but isn’t though a new essentiality besides them, but the correlation point of their collaboration, lack of any extension”. (“Mit einem handfesten Gleichnis gesagt: das Ich verhält sich zu seinem Träger wie die

In Jesus Christ, through supernatural intervention it was realized a rounding of the human nature not in itself, but in the vastest unity of a whole which existed before, of the divine hypostasis of the Logos. It was not rounded more human nature than it would be sufficient for a common man, but this rounding wasn't done like an independent whole, but it took its place into the entirety of godlike hypostasis.

There hadn't been about a spontaneity characteristic to the human nature into the frame of the vaster unity of the whole which he entered and which had His spontaneity. In such a case He would have affirmed Himself like a different hypostasis. Neither had there been about keeping the human nature under pressure, into a passivity state, a state of object and instrument, because than Jesus Christ would have not been fully human. The needs of the human nature like subject in Jesus were no longer satisfied on its own account, like starting from a spatial centre of it, but they were satisfied by the whole, as starting from a divine-human centre. The spontaneity virtues which emerge from human nature were not no longer activated by the human nature in isolation, but they are now of the divine-human whole who manifests them through His virtues of subject and of active spontaneity.

An analogy we would have in the report of the body with the human subject. If the body had

Drehungsachse des Erdballs zum Erdball selber, nicht aber etwa wie zu einer Kugel die abtrennbare Stange, die wir durch sie hindurch gesteckt haben, um ihr eine körperliche Achse zu geben. Es ist weder Geist noch Leben, eben sowenig jedoch eine neue Wesenheit neben ihnen, sondern der ausregungslose Beziehungspunkt ihres Zusammenwirkens“). Der Geist als Widersacher der Seele, II. Band, Leipzig, 1933, p. 516.

stood by itself, it would have been its own centre and the bearer of the movements. But, in togetherness with the soul, it has taken the function of a subject of this one, the role of a bearer of all body movements⁹².

We saw that a part of a substance separated from a vaster whole it gains its own center of movements. But it can be ascertained also the reverse phenomenon: a part of substance rounded into an apart hypostasis, if it is placed back into the continuity of a vaster whole, it

⁹² The archpriest **P. SVETLOV** clarifies the mystery of the hypostatic union: "Every man bears in him the resolution of the mystery of the embodiment or of union in Christ of the two natures in one person undivided, not separated, unmixed, and unchanged, what into man it is his «self», that determined or individual personality which is composed of his spiritual and material features, from soul and body. Without body, and even more without an own body, different to everybody, the man cannot be a full man, a determined personality: every human «self» not only thinks, wants etc. but he also sees, feels, moves etc.; that why the body features, like the soul ones, they compose the distinct property of each person, and they enter in its determination. Though, despite the close union, indivisible, of two natures into a human personality, each of them preserves its integrity and its relative independence, like two separate beings, without fusion and without mixing with one another. What is bodily into man it remains bodily or material, and what is spiritual it remains spiritual, and only the man, his «self», he is in the union of one with another, but without being one fully found into another, and remaining above of one or another, but serving like point or centre of the union both the bodily ones and spiritual ones. Put in the place of the human «self» the godlike «Self» or the Person of the Word, in the place of the soul, the Godhead, in the place of the body, the humankind, and this analogy will enlighten the mystery of the embodiment in such a measure, that it almost will lose the appearance of a mystery that is entirely unsearchable for the rationality". *The Christian Teaching in Apologetic Presentation*, vol. II, translated in Romanian language by Serghie Bejan and Constantin Tomescu, Chisinau, 1936, 586 – 7.

won't continue having the center of its movement in itself, but, somehow, this centre will have moved into the center of the larger unity, without that part of the substance losing something of its character. Its need for movement, its kinds of work, they are not annihilated, and they are not directed from the own center, but from the centre of the whole. This center of the whole has assumed also the function of centre and guide of the part. And this centre of the bigger unity it does not choke the part's needs for manifestation, but it also receives the characteristics of the centre of it. The laws to which the matter of our body would be subjected, when it would stay by itself, are felt by the whole subject of our being since the matter it has been taken into our being. The acts of feeding and changing of our body's matter, they are acts of the same unique centre from us, once the body is a part of this unity. Though the subject from us is of spiritual origin, he has become like a material centre - in what concerns the matter from within us - and it has taken its countenance, even if to his basis he has a spiritual character.

Of course, the body, by the fact that it has a common center with the spiritual nature from within us, it experiences a spiritualization, an accordance with a higher order. But its nature does not suffer any changing.

By analogy to the things ascertained in the immanent world, we can also say about the human nature received into the unity of the second Hypostasis of Godhead, by the fact that its centre coincided with the centre of the whole, that Jesus didn't lack anything in order to be a full man too. The unique centre from within Him, it has received all the features not only of the godlike nature, but also of the human nature. The human nature had in Him all the development which it has each time when it reaches the hypostasis state.

But the human nature's virtues of hypostasis they weren't validated from a different center of it, but from the common centre. This was the human and godlike centre in the same time.

All the difference of Jesus like man from the other people it consists in the fact that He is man not like a different centre, separate, but, like human centre He is in the same time the godlike centre. At Him we have the wonder that a centre of human nature and activity, it is in the same time a centre of the existence and of the entire power. The humanity is not rounded in Him, like a self sustained reality, but into the divinity's frames. The human sin and the unhappiness of the human nature, they consist in the fact that the man has weakened at extreme the connections with the divinity - connections which are like a life source to the man - because of the man's too great tendency towards autonomy. The man has accentuated the tendency towards the state of own hypostasis until he went off the obedience to God. In order to reestablish the connection between man and God it was appropriate that one of its rounding to have the centre inside God, identified like hypostatic centre of the Godhead. The man cannot keep continue to roll down on the slope of the nonentity, of estrangement from God, since the centre of his individualization is identical to one of the hypostatic centers of the Godhead.

Among people there stepped a man of whose centre is no longer outside God, but into God, or that center is God Himself. The relations of the other people with this man, they no longer mean relations lived outside God, but relations with God Himself. Out of a human hypostatical centre it flows all the power of elevating the humanity towards God. Whereas this hypostatical centre has a power of attraction towards good, through which He overcomes all purely human centers, He is somehow the centre of mankind. In the middle of the

mankind if has been placed a godlike centre. The mankind has gained, into its ontological region, a centre and this centre is God—the Word.

By no means the theory of Sergei Bulgakov, which discerns the subject from the nature, like another substantial part, it cannot be admitted, because, in this case, Jesus Christ would not have taken the humanity in its entirety, and the thesis that the subject from within man he would be an uncreated morsel from the divine being, it is a fantasy which would make incomprehensible the fall of the man into sin and his need for salvation.

On this theory he raised the vision about a reestablishing and a consummation of the intimate connection between the Logos like bearer of the uncreated Sophia and the world like a created Sophia, whereas the bearer of the uncreated Sophia became also the bearer of the created Sophia. In the beginning the world was created in the image of the uncreated Sophia, and the man, like subject of human nature and of cosmos, he is the image of the Logos, of the divine nature subject. Through embodiment, the Logos comes into His owns, or He intimately unites the two Sophia, the uncreated model and the created copy.

But the vision of an intimate and universal connection reestablished through the embodiment, between God and the mankind, respectively the created cosmos, it does not need the theory of the uncreated character of the human hypostasis. Between them and the divine Logos and between their nature and the divine nature, it can be affirmed an origin conformity and it may take place a maximum closeness only based on the fact that the humankind has been made thereby to have God as its center, a thing which has been fully accomplished or it has been reestablished through the role of hypostatic centre which the human nature has taken it from the divine Logos.

Without an original compliance of the human nature to the divine nature, and of the human hypostasis to the hypostasis of the Logos, it would not be possible that the two natures to get together so much than to have a common centre, and the godlike hypostatic centre to be able to keep the place of a human centre. God hasn't revealed Himself like Hypostasis, through an object or through an elementary force of nature. The object or the force of nature, it does not have a compliance to God. The soul, the eye, the godlike word, they can become soul, eye, and word of God-the Word, through which He directly reveals Himself. The human nature can become transparent to the divine nature and, through its virtues of forming a hypostasis, it can become the revelator of the divine hypostasis.

Generally, the divine hypostasis reveals itself like a human hypostasis in the same time or, by manifesting Himself like human hypostasis, He manifest Himself like a divine hypostasis. The human hypostasis showed himself this way in the light of the embodiment of the Logos like a parallel from another plan, from the created plan, of the divine hypostasis⁹³.

⁹³ Of course, through this we don't want to transform the miracle of the union of the divine nature and of the human nature - into the hypostasis of the Logos - in a natural phenomenon. To S. Bulgakov the Embodiment of the Son of God it almost means nothing different from the birth of the other human individuals. It is the same joining of a divine hypostasis with a human nature, which happens at the birth of each human being. The embodiment frames into the natures' events series. Moreover, it is a necessary moment in the closeness process between the uncreated Sophia, and the created Sophia. By this, S. Bulgakov remembers about Leontius from Byzantium, who established an exact parallel between the joining of the soul with the body into one hypostasis and the joining of divinity and humanity into Jesus Christ's Hypostasis. He said that the soul and the body are two perfect substances, which can preexist independently, which

We have highlighted that the divine Hypostasis, like the human hypostasis, they consist, in a main way, in the intentionality towards communion and, for this reason, they dispose of word, and they even are therefore word, the second divine Hypostasis being Word by excellence, and human hypostasis, word in the image of the divine Logos. The second divine hypostasis, by becoming a human hypostasis, He has not done something else but to bring - in the region accessible to the men - the intentionality towards communion which constitutes His essence, to

do not need for one another, which aren't made one for another, so that we have also into the *self* two sides which, by joining, they give a hypostasis. Maxim the Confessor pointed out that the two substances, the soul and the body, which the man is constituted of, they aren't complete and sufficient to themselves, but they are made for completeness, by giving, consequently, one **nature**, a composed nature. It is an interior necessity which leads to joining. At the man, the soul and the body form a single nature and, by the fact that in this joining he is a specimen of a species, and therefore he belongs to the order of the natural existences, which, as such, all of them represent a nature of them. The divinity and the humanity joined in Jesus Christ, they still remain two natures, by the fact that there isn't in themselves an intrinsic necessity to unite into a whole, and Jesus Christ isn't a specimen of a species. A big difference between Jesus Christ, like a Hypostasis -constituted of two natures - and people, is that the joining of the natures it produces by an act of total freedom, not into the virtue of a law. V. Grumel: "L'union hypostatique et la comparaison de l'âme et du corps chez Léonce du Byzance et saint Maxime le Confesseur. So, the conformity of the mankind to the godhead, its capacity to make itself revelator nature of the divine Hypostasis, it haven't to be understood into the exaggerate meaning that there would even exist a necessity for this joining. *Echos the L'orient*, 1926, p. 392-406.

dress up His intentionality into the human intentionality. And He has done this whereas He has taken the human elements like means of His manifestation.

Through the human nature, Jesus Christ hasn't shown Himself only like man, but also like God. The identity of the hypostasis of the two natures it doesn't consist only in that of one and the same subject shows Himself like God through the godlike nature and like man through the human nature, but in the same time the unique hypostasis shows Himself both like God and like man through each of His natures. This is the meaning of features communication, based on which the human features and activities are attributed to the Hypostasis considered as God, and or vice versa. And this is based, actually, on the absence of the separation of the natures into the unity of the same Hypostasis. The hypostasis shown through the human nature's elements, He is shown together with His godlike characteristics (so, with the nature), and vice versa. This means however that the human nature is adequately transparent to God, it is in the image of the Godhead⁹⁴. The divine nature's centre makes itself also a centre to the human nature, without annulling this one, and without hiding Himself. The human nature can have a common centre with the divine nature. Without a movement from the middle of His

⁹⁴ Sophrony, the patriarch of Jerusalem, said: "Is, Qui hominem ab initio plasmavit ipsumque ad propriam suam imaginem condidit, non alia ratione hominem salvandum propriamque imaginem redimendam esse indicat quam si ipse natura fiat homo, propriamque imaginem proprium suum efficiat indumentum". (Or. II. in S.S. Deisparae Ann, P. G. 87, col. 3233 C – 3236 A. Ct. Georgius Cosma, De "Oeconomia" incarnationis secundum S. Sophronium Hierosolymitanum, Roma, 1940, p. 86.

divine nature, without any descent from His godlike character, a centre of godlike nature becomes also a centre of the human nature, by receiving all the attributes of it, by manifesting Himself through all its elements, and thereby showing Himself like man and in the same time, even through them, like God.

The human word, like an expression of the human being centre, like a confession, by excellence, of the human hypostasis, it is in the same time, to Jesus Christ, the godlike Word, like a showing of the divine Hypostasis.

Of course, it is not about sonority, which is only an exterior clothing, but it is about the ultimate intentionality, which is in every word of Him, in the same time divine and human. From a common centre starts the word of Jesus Christ, being both godlike and human. From this common centre start all the godlike manifestations, and are set in movement all the ones of the human nature, the godlike ones through human instruments and the human ones through as uploaded with the godlike element. "He was suffering in a godlike manner, said Saint Maximos the Confessor, for He was suffering willingly, because He wasn't a simple man and He as man was doing wonders, for He was doing them through body, because He wasn't God unveiled" (Migne, G.P. 91, 105 B).

Hans Urs von Balthazar is right when he sees in the Christological formula, established by the Synod of Chalcedon, the first apparition of the person factor into the philosophical conscience of humanity, and of its report with the being, rightly solved, but rather through an intuition than through a detailed specification. The Greek philosophy did not now but the dimension of the nature, of the being. It wasn't possible to find, only into the frame of this dimension, a satisfactory explanation for the union of the two natures in Jesus Christ, and for the fact that He is in

the same time both God and man. "It wasn't possible to express the union between God and world, in Jesus Christ, through a pure philosophy of the «being» (durch eine reine «Wesens» - Philosophie). It was affirmed this union like «physical», like «ontological», and the consequence was the mixing of the two poles into a new being; it was looked for an avoidance of this mixing, but they only found the solution of an accidental unity, an exterior one, one moral through a special relation between the two natures" (W. c. p. 199). The Monophysitism and the Nestorianism were wrong just through the fact that didn't saw something else except natures, except the dimension of the Greek philosophy so, they have to keep them separated or to mix them. At Chalcedon it was affirmed a special dimension, a third factor towards the two natures, in which to be accomplished their union without merging them. But this third factor, on the other hand, it wasn't seen like something coming from outside the natures, like an essential novelty which to complete the nature, but like a growth from nature, like accomplishing of it, like a new step of the developed reality from the being.

Chalcedon has anticipated the later philosophical development which has reached the conscience of the lack of identity, between the order of the being and that of the existential. "With a kind of visionary certainty it is established a formula which will unveil only later all its senses" (H. U. von Balthazar, p. 198). Leontius from Byzantium and Maximos the Confessor, they deepened even more the right meaning of this new dimension and of its report with the dimension of the being. The later philosophy, even if couldn't avoid anymore the problem of the person like a reality different from the being, like a concrete necessary shape of the spiritual being, it struggled to look for other determinations of it. It identified the subject to the conscience or it considered it a

mysterious factor descended from outside into nature. But later, in the times closer to our days, it seems that it has liquidated all this wanderings on strange roads. Ludwig Klages, the existential philosophy, the French contemporary philosophy, they return to highlighting the person like an ontological reality different from the being, but they also consider the person like a concretization and accomplishing of the being.

I have insisted in another chapter on the fact that the subject is intentionality oriented towards other subjects. Isn't there really a contradiction between this definition and the ones told into this chapter about the person? The contradiction is nowhere to be found, for in this chapter it hasn't been said what the subject is, but it has only been shown the subject character of the hypostasis, after it has been highlighted that this degree of existence grows up from the nature itself through its rounding into a whole that stands by itself. It has been shown that the hypostasis is subject, namely a stage director of nature's powers, but it hasn't been determined in greater details the sense, the meaning of the subject.

This sense seems to be, mainly, precisely the intentionality towards communion, so this is a closer determination of the subject of the hypostasis.

Actually, the acts of will and the works, whose agent is the subject, they wouldn't make any sense if the subject hadn't the tendency to manifest himself to the others and to enter in report with others through voluntary acts and through his works. From the two characteristics of the subject: to have a nature, and to work through that nature, namely to manifest himself, the first one made no sense but only in the goal of the second one, because otherwise the nature would be conceived like something static, and there would not exist the possibility to want and to work through it. The purpose of the subject it cannot be either only that

of exercising his will and his work on his nature, because in this case the will and the work would have to have their origin into the subject, and not into the nature itself. The nature would have to be a passive object, totally at the disposition of the subject.

Besides this, the fact that also into God there is will and work, and to God cannot be attributed a will and a work to self-improvement, it shows that, in principle, the will and the work, which belong to the definition of any nature, they have a transitory goal, that of sustaining the report between different existences. The spiritual natures are kept in this report by laws. The subject, like a hypostasis of the spiritual natures, he brings the liberty in the determination of his report with other realities, but, in fact, this report is based on the being's character itself.

These considerations help us to realize even more about the true multi-hypostatic character of God. God's being cannot be without will and work.

Otherwise would be a static and powerless reality. Though, the will and the work of His being cannot simply be a constraint to God in report with something from outside Him, because this would mean that He must be creating from eternity. On the other hand, the will and the work of His being cannot exist for nothing, neither like auto-improvement means.

The will and the work, like eternal manifestations, cannot be conceived in a way worthy of God, only with the meaning of inter-hypostatic manifestations. The eternal work of God it is the love between the three persons of the Trinity.

The eternal meaning of the divine being's work it is the eminent purpose of the all subjects' works: the activation of the intentionality towards communion. The intentionality towards communion with fellow humans is, therefore, the fundamental tendency of the subject, and the living into communion means the

fulfillment of it⁹⁵.

This structure of the whole nature, distributed in genres and species, and accomplished through hypostasis, it shows that God created it to form a harmonious whole, chaired by the humankind, like a kingdom of love manifested between its members and God⁹⁶.

The sin, consisting in a passionate selfishness, it has produced disorder and anarchy amongst people, instead of unification in love.

Through His embodiment, the godlike Word has started the work of gathering the humankind into a

⁹⁵ **M. HEDEGGER**, when determining the fundamental structure of the person, of the subject like **Existenz** unlike the **Vorhandenheit**, he sees the characteristic of the existence in the incapacity to be an entity locked in himself, but to be into a continuous launching in front of himself and towards the things from the world which he lives in. We express the subject through the sentence "I cogitate", "I work", but always "I cogitate to **something**" or "I work to **something**". Through these, it is recognized, in fact, the same tendency towards communion, which constitute the heart of the subject. "Kant vermied zwar die Abschnürung des Ichs vom Denken, ohne jedoch das «Ich denke» selbst in seinem vollen Wesensbestande als «Ich denke etwas» anzusetzen und vor allem ohne die ontologische «Voraussetzung» für das «Ich denke etwas» als Grundbestimmtheit des selbst es zu **Vorhandenheit**, anzusetzen und vor allem ohne die ontologische «Voraussetzung» für das «Ich denke etwas» als Grundbestimmtheit des selbst es zu sehen... Wird darunter (das «Etwas») verstanden ein innerweltliches Seiendes, dann liegt darin unausgesprochen die Voraussetzung von Welt; und gerade dieses Phänomen bestimmt die seinsverfassung des Ichs mit... das Ich-sagen meint das Seiende, das je ich bin als «Ich bin in einer Welt»", W. c. p. 321.

⁹⁶ From the Monotheistic conception or from the one of S. Bulgakov, one cannot draw such a conclusion, if the subject has come from outside into nature and he doesn't receive his work from the nature. The work, like a transitory tension, it isn't rooted into the nature of the reality itself.

kingdom of love. By making a hypostatic centre of it to coincide to a hypostatic centre of Godhead, the work of the human nature is reinstated in the frame of His person on the line of the manifestation of the most complete intimacy with God, and of the most complete intentionality for the communion with the fellow humans. The divine-human hypostasis does not direct the work of the human nature, but only how would have to direct it any hypostasis in consummate communion with God and with the fellow human. The liberty of the human nature from within Jesus Christ, it is not restrained at all, but it consents through the divine-human hypostasis to everything it means the leading of it. Like divine-human hypostasis, Jesus Christ experiences, on every step, both His liberty like man, and the liberty of the human nature which he represents. But this liberty of Him like man, it entirely orients according to His will like God, and only this is the condition of the full human liberty. However, Jesus Christ is the link through which entire mankind is placed into a virtual connection with God, remaining on the account of each individual to contribute to the activation of this connection, in order to reestablish his hypostasis on the natural purpose of the full intentionality for communion with God, and through God with his fellow human.

This connection with God, in which the entire mankind is placed through Jesus Christ, it does not have only a “physical” character, an organic one, but it is a reality produced and sustained through the spiritual force of the God-Man. The intentionality towards communion it is love. The subject consists in the manifestation of love, but the nature itself tends towards this manifestation of love.

The divine Logos is the most complete subject and this means that He is the most intensive and the most penetrating love. By making Himself man, by descending the intensity of His love among the human

subjects, all of them have been by the efficacy of His love. In the same time, it has emerged a human hypostasis into whom the intentionality towards communion it has reached the supreme intensity, by making the people to feel Him like the true attraction centre of them.

A new look into the depth of truth of the dogma about the hypostatic unity, it is occasioned to us by the lights which it throws towards reality by and large, the thinking of the French philosopher Louis Lavelle. And, according to him, the work (the act, how he called it) it is not brought by the subject, but the subject finds it available to use it how he wants. So, the work is of the Whole which the individual belongs to. "The individuals, he said, although they hold in some measure the initiative, they are, though, the depositaries and the instruments of a power which exceeds them. Will be said then, that the act (the work) it is the inalienable property of the individual conscience and that, instead of confounding everything, we must take heed that the constitutive act of each conscience it is separated from all the others? But also here we must defend ourselves against an illusion. Every individual takes in possession the act and he disposes of it through an initiative which is of his own" (De l'Acte, p. 82). "The act, if one may say so, it is capable of everything, but it belongs to our own conscience to make it capable of a certain thing" (p. 83). It is like we are hearing Maximos the Confessor, declaring: "Is not the same thing to want and to want in a certain way". And Lavelle said also: "The act through which I cogitate... it is independent from the content itself which I am giving to it and which it makes out of me a particular individual. It must, without any doubt, to be me the one who fulfills it, but this fulfillment, which makes it my own, it does not change its nature, neither it exhausts it" (p. 86).

“Since it is assumed through your or through my initiative, the act produces both our own autonomy and also our differences (which do not result only out of our individual nature, but also from the exercise itself of our own liberty)” (p. 86).

So, after Lavelle the subject does not bring a new entity, but it is only the way of acquiring and of autonomous activation of a general power, of the nature, like we are calling it, according to the dogmatic formula. Just because that the subject brings not nether the work, but this belongs to nature, respectively to natures when we are talking about Jesus Christ.

But, by making abstraction of these, out of the conception of Lavelle are arising also other conclusions of a more general order. According to him, the ultimate reality is an eternal and indivisible Act, which works not only on an absolute plan, but it stays also like availability in all individuals, in order these ones to actualize it according to their limited possibilities. It is the same divine essence, indivisible, in all the subjects.

We will rectify this pantheistical feature of his conception by adapting it to the formula of the IVth and VIth Ecumenical Synods. Into the whole human nature there is the same indivisible work potentiality – it became active in different ways through the concrete human subjects – that permanently is sustained by the divine will and work. From divinity's Act to human nature's Act there is a crossing. The divine work is not one with the human nature's work, but it constitutes it and it sustains the later one, which is one and the same in all individuals. Each subject actualizes, in their own shapes and in a limited way, the same work potentially available in him, like in all individuals. Each one puts into the work the common fund which is at the disposal of everybody.

That's why, there is in each individual the sentiment of responsibility not only for his own destiny,

but for the one of the entire world, by realizing that through his work he produces or he can produce modifications into the entire created existence⁹⁷.

The Son of God, by making Himself Man, he has become one of the internal agents of this common fund of human efficiency. He has become even the central activation agent of the common human fund, by the fact that in Him the subject, by being godlike, He is not carried by any centrifugal selfish tendency. He has directed on the right road the vast treasure of energy of the human nature and He has given and He gives the most considerable impulse to it.

All the human subjects, how many come into the world, they experience the impulse and the guidance which is given to the common fund of human energy by this divine-human agent of it. The wave of cosmic spiritual energy, borne by the countless created subjects, it is borne with a particular efficiency by the divine Subject, by crossing it by the divine energy and by transfiguring it, by doing the most intimate closeness and interpenetration between God and His creation, which is the ultimate purpose of the embodiment of the Son of God.

⁹⁷ "On peut dire que, dans l'unité vivante de ma conscience, je fais déjà l'expérience d'un acte qui, à travers des opérations particulière susceptible de se répéter, de se modifier, de s'enrichir, témoigne de son identité toujours disponible et me montre qu'il est participable par moi comme il est donc participable par tout", W. c. p. 89. "Notre responsabilité à l'égard de l'être total est un témoignage en faveur de son unité ; in n'y a pas d'être particulier qui ne sente comptable de l'univers entier, qui n'ait en réserve une idée auquel il entreprend de se conformer; il sent qu'il doit prendre en main la charge même de la création... tous les gestes que nous faisons modèlent tout à tout toutes les formes du réel, les multiplient, les transforment et prennent leur part de responsabilité dans l'acte même qui les a créés" (p. 90-91).

V. 2. The Problem of the Kenosis

An aspect of the great mystery of the embodiment it is that of the way which the human nature has been received in, into the divine subject of the Logos. The second one is that of the matching of the Logos for this role. It is the great problem of the kenosis, of the humiliation, of the humbleness, of disrobing of power, and of glorification, of the Son of God, in order to be a subject on the measure of the human nature. It has been shown that the Logos, like bearer of the human possibilities and like a worker through them, He appears humbler. In the same time, He bears also the godlike powers, activating through them. What it is possible like, that the one and the same subject to be in each moment both humble and full of glory, by manifesting Himself in bordered works and in unlimited powers? What it is possible like, for instance, that one and the same subject to be in one and the same moment both limited in knowledge and unlimited? It doesn't the boundlessness of the knowledge melt down, into its blinding light, the darkness circle from around the limited knowledge?⁹⁸

For the resolution of this hardship, there have been formulated in the Protestant theology, during nineteenth century, the kenotic theories⁹⁹.

⁹⁸ **H. ANDRUTSOS**, "The Dogmatic of the Eastern Orthodox Church", p. 196-7.

⁹⁹ This term it is taken about the Greek ἐκένωσεν, meaning *was emptied*, and it was used by Paul the Apostle in Philippians, 2, 5-11. The first representative of the kenosis was I. Brenz in the sixteenth century. He argued that the humanity of Jesus is imparted with the features of the godlike nature, but the kenosis stays into the fact that the human nature "doesn't reveal the godlike greatness which He has, but it uses it only in a hidden way (Bensow, *Die Lehre von der Kenose*, Leipzig 1903, p. 19). In

the formula of Concord it is said that the human nature has made only a hidden use of the divine features which it was imparted with, and that "God had disrobed Himself also of the hidden use of the godlike features bestowed to the human nature" (Bensow, p. 23). The theologians from Giessen and Tübingen sustained in common, an acquirement of the godlike features by the human nature and the humiliation state. They differed, however, in which concerns the opinion about the use of them. The ones from Giessen sustained a depletion of use. The human nature has the godlike features, but it renounced to activate them. But, according to the godlike nature, the Logos used of them. The ones from Tübingen were recognizing a perpetual use of the godlike features in a hidden way (Bensow, p. 27). Characteristic to everyone of them, it is the Luther's doctrine about the ability of the human nature to receive the godlike features. But all of them affirm the changelessness of the godlike nature. The actual kenotic theories, the ones which talk about a restriction of the godlike nature itself through embodiment, they start in the nineteenth century, with Gottfried Thomasius. According to him, the Logos no longer has two life forms - one with the godlike nature, unchanged, and one with the humiliated human nature - but only a single one. The human nature renounced to some features either to all of them, or only to their use, in order the Logos to totally transpose Himself into a human life form. According to G. Thomasius, the kenosis is a voluntarily self-limitation of the Logos, by renouncing to the actualization of His features in which He manifests Himself like Creator and Lord of the world: almightiness, omnipresence, omniscience. But He doesn't renounce to the godlike being. Into the Logos hasn't exist two consciences since the embodiment, but only one divine-human, in development. "Like gradually grows His conscience of His internal nature, it suddenly unveils Him the conscience of His divine filiation, of His report with the Father and of His calling like a Savior of the world, like during our natural and spiritual development, it appears to us, together with the conscience of the *self*, the conscience of our kinship with God and of our earthly destination" ("Ein Beitrag zur kirchlichen Christologie" in *„Zeitschrift für Protestantismus und Kirche"*, Band IX, 1845, p. 263, Bensow, p. 49). Kindred theories formulated: Liebner, von Hofmann, Ebhard, Hahn, Gess,

Delitzsch, Martensen etc. The Benson's doctrine deserves a special mention: The One Who has become man, He hasn't renounced to any godlike feature, but only to the form of activating them (Betätigungsform) (p. 229): "The kenosis consist in that that the eternal form of the activation of the features it is changed for the temporal form, and that implied that, for the possibility of developing, a descent to the state of potentiality (p. 282). Bensow considered that the being of God is love. In the sense of an unchanged love it must be understood the changelessness of God, and not like a physical rigidity. Almightyness means the power of God to do whatever He wants. When love finds out that it can accomplish a goal better through a limitation of the manifestation of the power, it can does it, and this is also a manifestation of godlike power. Because the salvation of the man required that the Son of God to make Himself man, His supra-temporality and over-spatiality changed with the temporal and spatial form of existence. In fact, the supra-temporality of God it means His independence from time, and by no means His helplessness to enter the time, if He want to. That would be deism. The same He stays with the over-spatiality. It is only the possibility of independence from space, and not the necessity. At omniscience, in fact, He didn't renounce, but only He placed Himself into a state of gradually reached to it (p. 278-279). Like a generally basis of this changing of the activation form of God's features, under the leading and in service of love – which is the being of God – Bensow finds out that the world was created like a kingdom of power, with the destination to unify itself with something higher, at the state of the kingdom of the glory (regnum potentiae – regnum gloriae); only on this level it reflects the true being of God-the Love. But the world cannot raise at this state because of the sin. The Son of God For came the removal of these obstacles. The world has always remained a kingdom of the power. But into this empire of power, in which is manifested the power of God – which means also a limitation to man's liberty – it is being founded now a kingdom of the grace; the kingdom of the power must be purified by love. That's why, God doesn't come under the countenance of the power, but of the love, which implies the power, but still being something superior to the power (p. 282-283).

Today in Germany these theories have been abandoned. They are found, though, at many Anglican theologians. Among the Orthodox theologians, the first to borrow these theories, which in fact are very much similar, is S. Bulgakov¹⁰⁰. We are going to give in the followings, an abstract of his theory, being satisfied with the information placed in his notes regarding the other representatives of the kenosis` theory.

It refers both to the godlike nature and to the second Hypostasis of the Holy Trinity.

"The nature, says Bulgakov, like basis of the hypostatic existence and like source of the life, it remains unchanged and undiminished, also in Christ". "The diminishing does not refer to the nature (usia), but to the norm of life according to the godlike nature (μορφή), like it is said in Philippians 2, 5-11), to the godlike manner in which Christ had disrobed Himself through His embodiment. From here it follows that the nature and the manner, even if they are into a reciprocal connection, like the basis and the consequences of it, though, they still can be separated from one another" (p. 262). "The manner" the glory, the greatness of which the Son disrobed Himself by taking "the manner of a servant", the norm of the being`s existence, by following that after the resurrection to regain the glory which He had before the world existed (Jo: 17: 5). The glory is the Sophia, namely the godlike nature manifested, to Himself in an uncover manner. It is the joy and the love of the godlike persons, of all three of Them together. Of this joy and happiness the Son had emptied Himself. "The Son of God descends from heavens by leaving the godlike life. His godlike nature preserves only the potentiality of the glory, which will be again actualized at the end of His earthly life".

¹⁰⁰ W. c.

In the Russian theology the doctrine about Sophia it has been developed much lately. Sophia, at father Bulgakov, it means the godlike life, the greatness, His glory, like an inter-Trinitarian manifestation of the godlike nature. It is the uncreated Sophia. But besides the uncreated Sophia, there exists the created Sophia, which is the created universe, a copy and an effect of the internal godlike world. The Son of God, through embodiment, He descended the uncreated Sophia, His godlike life, from the state of plenitude integrally manifested from eternity, into the stage of becoming, of developing. He reduced it, therefore, on the moment of His birth like man, to the initial moment of development, to a pure potential state, to the state of a Child also according to His godlike life, and not only according to the human one.

Into the internal life of the Holy Trinity it hasn't been changed anything by this. The three hypostatic centers are continues to exist and each one of the three persons continues to maintain His eternal personal relation with the other two, and the happiness which irradiates from these relations, it also continue to exist: Father enjoys the Son and the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost enjoys the Father and the Son, and the Son, by continuing to exist like a godlike person, He irradiates objectively the godlike life and happiness.

In itself, the godlike life and happiness of the Son it continues to exist, but like subject, He does no longer taste it, for Himself it ceases to exist.

"The glory and the Godhead into Sophia shine from before eternity into the heavens, for the Holy Trinity, through, the second hypostasis, He leaves this shininess. He does no longer have it for Himself, but He receives the appearance of the bondsman, into the free ascesis of the kenosis. In this meaning "the young Child-God from eternity, He ceases to have His godhead for Himself: He remains only with the godlike nature, without Her Glory" (p. 253).

The diminution, however, it refers to the hypostasis of the Word too. And this thing can be understood by itself. If the nature diminishes, the hypostasis which represents and carries the nature will remain in his full shininess. But also for another motif it must happen like this. The human nature cannot grow up like human nature into the frames of a hypostasis so different from it like it is the godlike one.

Therefore, the divine hypostasis or *self*, by substituting into Jesus Christ the human hypostasis or *Self*, it had diminished Himself, until the level of a human hypostasis or *self*, for the substitution to be done into the most completely and natural way.

The hypostasis manifests into the conscience of the self about himself. At the man the self is immersed in the current of the becoming; it appears and it grows. But in the same time it has also a supra-temporal character. The time does not produce him, but it only develops him and it actualizes him. The self exists also before the apparition like subconscious and from this subconscious the conscience grows up always, it specifies the self. Like principle of the entelechy, which leads the human being development, it is from the beginning.

In our act of conscience we perceive this supra-temporality of the self or, more precisely, this supra- and sub-temporality of it. We perceiving it like spirit both subject of becoming and above the becoming.

To God, however, the hypostases are not subjected to the becoming. But one of the divine hypostases make himself also a human hypostasis, namely just into the sense that He renounces to the permanent actuality of his conscience, by entering also, in this regard, the current of the becoming. The self of the Word remains the same in His being, of course, but potentiates His conscience by accepting to be developed just like a human conscience.

“The second hypostasis disrobes Himself from His godhead, leaving it, not like a source of the inter-hypostatic life, but like personal godlike form of existence: the Son ceases to be God for Himself and, therefore, He does not refer now towards the Father only like a hypostasis of equal godhead (“I and the Father, we are one”), but also like one who considers the Father like His God. The conscience of paternity of the Father it makes room; it is plugged by the reference of being sent by Father” (p. 257). Objectively, in Himself, the Son still remains Trinitarian hypostasis and in the same eternal relation of a born from the Father, but subjectively, for Himself, He relation of obeying the Father relation, the relation of human hypostasis.

The moment which the process of the embodiment is started on, the Son is already in a hypostasis state with the conscience and with the power immersed in pure potentiality. That's why He does not make the conception, but another godlike hypostasis makes it: the Holy Ghost; He does not come, He is sent. He only starts to be (to be actual, of course). The acts of humiliation, of diminution, of depletion of power and greatness, they are committed before the embodiment, into transcendent. The Golgotha – the thrilling sacrifice – it was committed into heavens, the one from the earth is only a consequence of that.

The godlike hypostasis was reduced to that minimum degree of efficiency which makes possible that from the blood of the Virgin to be formed exactly a human nature with his limitations; to the human nature He meant *one* human hypostasis.

Interesting considerations are made into the book of the priest S. Bulgakov regarding the growth, the development of the self-conscience of God into Jesus Christ. “His self-conscience is being actualized through the human conscience” (p. 247). “Here we have the most misunderstood and the most thrilling self-

diminishing of the eternal godlike hypostasis of the Logos, Who immerses into transitoriness and succession, for – after He extinguished Himself into subconscious, through the «time spent into the Mother`s blood» - to raise up at the surface, into the sleepy conscience of the child who will «grow up» (Cited place 2, 40), arriving to the «measure of full growth of Jesus» (Eph. 4, 13), (p. 260).

The man sees, inwardly, his self, like being above the time, though unfolds his contents in time. Jesus too, He was seeing, inwardly, increasingly clear, His godlike self; and not through a conscience parallel to the human one, but just through this. «The human hypostasis of Jesus, the «son of the carpenter», by having earthly relatives, He is the hypostasis of the Logos and these are: the mystery and the depth which gradually and ceaselessly are unveiled into His human conscience, together with the growth of his human conscience, like His godlike conscience and His filiation. But this seeing of the mystery of His godlike filiation, this conscience of God, it doesn't suppress into Christ His temporarily and human conscience through which and into which it illuminates in time, like an inwardly sun which lights the window of the empiric conscience».

«The self conscience of the God-the Word's hypostasis, by raising up out of the preconscious state and by gradually developing and specifying Himself, He differs, surely, and essentially, from the conscience of the common man. Though, after the type of the development, the divine-human hypostasis does not differ by the human one and the God-the Man is truly a man. In reality, also the human hypostatic ghost is partaker to eternity and sees Himself not into the form of becoming, but like supra-temporal existence... In the same way, also the human person of Jesus Christ Has the conscience of His hypostatic godhead, of

His hypostasis not separated from the Father and from the Holy Ghost, but this conscience He gains it not only through timeless sight, but also as human, discursively... This conscience through which He knows Himself like Logos through the human point of view and through the human life, not outside of it or above it, it is not only a human conscience or only a godlike conscience, but it is a divine-human one. In brief, Jesus Christ it is God-the Man not only in the meaning that in Him are united, into one, the hypostasis of two natures, godlike and human, but also this hypostasis himself is, after such a union, a divine-human one: the union of the two natures permeates to His own core" (p. 261-2).

Without this self-diminishing, without kenosis, the abyss between God and the man would not be defeated either in Jesus Christ. Only through kenosis the godhead descends right into the bosom of the humanity, to ennoble it not from exterior, like an object, but from inside. Without kenosis the human nature could not endure the close intimacy with the godlike nature; it would have been burned, it would have been melted down by the too big power of the godlike nature. How could the limited human knowledge persist in the same head with the borderless knowledge of God?- or the human helplessness with His almightiness? "The godhead in Jesus was inspiring His divine-human person and it manifested in the measure in which the human nature could receive it and could contain it, but not forcing it and not outside of it, and in this it is shown the uninterrupted, the actual kenosis of the godhead, who measures Himself according to the human ones" (p. 265).

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Before proceeding to a critical examination of this problem, it is good to underline that, to S. Bulgakov,

the radical kenosis does not imply a too big difficulty, given the fact that, according to him, the human hypostasis still is of divine essence, like the Logos which it is substituted for, in Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, we can ask the question to the ones who postulate a radical kenosis in order to make possible the continuation of the human features into the hypostasis of the Logos: After the exit of Jesus Christ from the state of kenosis and the passing into the state of glory, through resurrection and ascension to heaven, what it is the continuation of His human features possible like? That is possible for the human nature does not melt, not even then, into the godlike nature. And if the human nature can exist into Logos, without kenosis, after ascension, we won't see the reason why the human nature couldn't do that before. Bulgakov thinks, in the Monophysite way, that at the ascension to heaven Jesus renounced to the body. And it seems like all the ones who believe in kenosis, they think similarly. But this is a wrong teaching which almost makes superfluous the embodiment of the Son of God.

In order to circumscribe the problem it is necessary the better listening to the voice of the Holy Scripture and of the Churchly dogma. What the Holy Scripture is telling us? Though it speaks impressively about the real humanity of Jesus Christ, by attributing Him all he toils and the pains of the humanity, it does not less clearly speak about His godhead, and not just through simple affirmation, like about a reality beyond any ascertaining, but also through the certification of the manifestation of many of the features. So that, about a kenosis in the sense given to it by the Protestant theology of the nineteenth century, like renouncement, from the part of the Son of God, to the activation of some of His divine features, there cannot be the case. The churchly dogma declares that the two natures are

united in Christ “unchanged”. Though the believers of the kenosis try to get rid of this difficulty, through the affirmation that not the godlike nature was changed through the embodiment of the Logos, but the form of the activations of its features, though, the sense of this lack of change it is stated by the Sixteenth Ecumenical Synod, through the addition that also “the work” of each nature remained unchanged.

The Holy Scripture talks to us, actually, about a humiliation, about a kenosis of the Logos, even by leaving apart the testimonies of his full humanity. At Matthew 13, 32, Jesus declares that He do not know the day of the final judgment. At John 17, 5, Jesus prays to God: “And now glorify Me Father with the glory (δόξα) which I had with You before the world was.” Therefore, He asked for the restitution of a glory which He didn’t have it for a while. Paul the Apostle says at Cor. II, 8, 9: Christ “impoverished Himself for you to be rich, for you to become rich with His poverty”. But the classic place of the humiliation, of the Son’s diminution, it is at Phil. 2, 5- 11: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, Who, by being in the form of God, thought it not as robbery to be equal to God, but He emptied (ἐκένωσεν) Himself, by taking upon Himself the form of a bondsman, and by making Himself in the likeness of men. And by being found in countenance as a man, He humbled Himself by making Himself obedient until death, and even the death on the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted him, and He has given Him a name which is above every name. For, in the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those from beneath the earth. And every tongue must confess, that Lord is Jesus Christ into to the glory of God-the Father.”

But, parallel to this places and to all those which show that Jesus Christ was tired, was thirsty, was hungry, and was upset with His soul to the death,

pouring blood sweat, are those which show that, though full man, like every man, He was having also manifestations which are not explained through human powers, and these manifestations which He was declaring like produced by Himself, and not like being the simple instrument of a alien superior force. He healed sick people through a word or through a gesture, He resurrected dead people, and He knew the things happening at distance (when He sent the disciples to prepare the paschal lamb). From His mouth started a multitude of declarations through which He confessed not only that He was the Son of God, but that He activated during His time on earth His divine features. He affirmed, thereby, that He was exercising the power of forgiveness of sins, that what was the Father doing He was doing that too, so that the one who saw Him, that one saw the Father (John 14, 9) because the words and the deeds which He was telling and doing, He couldn't have been told and done like a man, but He told them and did them like the Father being in Him. If He told once that nobody knows about the Doomsday, another time He declared that nobody knows the Father except Him: the Son. Therefore, though He was in the countenance of a humble man, on every step He took it was seen that He was God too. To the Protestants, by eliminating from Gospels, like being unreal, all the miraculous elements, all the wonderful deeds, it is natural thus to reach the theory of the kenosis in the sense of the Logos renouncing to all the manifestation of the superhuman power of the godhead, in the time of His life on earth¹⁰¹.

¹⁰¹ Today, the dialectic theology speaks more about a kenosis of the humanity in Jesus Christ, by sustaining that God was seen into Jesus Christ precisely in the complete crisis of any human power. Not in something positive it is shown that Jesus got close to the world and God speaks to Him, but into the descending of the humanity until to an empty which shows to

us all our nothingness. But God is an X beyond this entire void, so He isn't into history, or into time. He produces and highlights to the people the crisis of all that exists human in Jesus Christ. What He shows us in time and space, only through the despondency in which He places us, it opens the way to God, it "Reveals" Him to us. On one hand, thus, a radical kenosis, on the other hand a banishing of God, beyond any historical plan. "In Jesus we know the fragmentary, the void, the interior lack of fixity, even of the religious world, with unavoidable evidence. All the reality is subjected to the crisis, there isn't exists any point around us which not to be marked by it, undermined, and crumbled. And from this absolute problematic of all, doesn't escape either the own *self* of the watcher; we do not sit on a raised, neutral height, like spectators on a mountain peak, the foundations of which are collided by the frightening chaos; all of us are comprised through destiny and guilt, into the swirl... The existence of the crucified Jesus that crumbles to the deep, it has the power to kidnap us from all the illusions, to throw us into the knowledge of all our problematic". But "the chaos of these deep desolations isn't characterized obviously through what in it isn't seen but an accidental reality, a meaningless one, of the world; a hidden and deep meaning, it is announced rather through Him... An unintuitive meaning, that God Himself is present here, that the authentic and full despair, it is always a «comforted» despair". "Die Christologischen Anschauungen der dialektischen Theologie", von J. W. Schmidt-Japung, in *Apologetisches Jahrbuch*, 1925, Gütersloh, p. 95-6. Further, Schmidt-Japung quotes from K. Barth, the representative of the dialectic school: „The intuitive sense of the life of Jesus Christ, which can be described like the abolition of all the human possibilities, it supposes, though, obviously, an unintuitive central point, from where this crisis starts, an impossible which are measured all his intuitive possibilities within, a direction giver and a concentric point" (Römerbrief, p. 185). And Schmidt-Japung continues: "This X which rises at the border of the intuitive it is the unintuitive, non-historical, timeless, and not-given. Therefore, this central point, unintuitive of whole history, it isn't a historical moment"(p. 97-98). Other modern Protestant theologians, they simply don't recognize the embodiment of the Son of God, but they consider

If the Holy Scripture, in addition to all the affirmation of a descending, of an emptying of the Son of God through embodiment, it insists over many manifestations of some godlike features of Him and, by and large, over the active presence of His godhead as such, what will we have to understand the kenosis

the Son of God like an organ of the Revelation and like the Son of God, only in the sense that by being human, God made Him an organ of His Revelation, and He made from His word a word of God. For example, H. W. Schmidt says: „Was bei der Fleischwerdung des göttlichen Wortes geschieht, ist dies, das ein Mensch Wort Gottes sein darf, ein Mensch darf in die Einheit mit Gottes persönlichen Leben eintreten; Gott wohnt ihm Offenbarung Gottes gemacht“, „Die Menschwerdung Gottes“, in „Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie“, 1942, 19. Jar gang – I. Vierteljahrsheft, p. 124. In the same way thinks P. Althaus, by fully following to Schleiermacher and A. Rischl. Jesus is the Son of God only like the members of the Christian community become sons of God. The difference between Him and us it stays only in the fact that He is the “first born” from people like Son of God through divine power. “Die «Menschwerdung» Gottes in Christo schließt sich uns auf durch die Analogie der «Menschwerdung» Gottes in den Wiedergeborenen durch den Heiligen Geist. So wird Geistchristologie die Lösung“, „Christologie des Glaubens“, in Festschrift Jhmels, p. 290. H. W. Schmidt criticizes the Chalcedonian doctrine of the en-hypostatic under the motive that through it, it would be truncated the humanity of Jesus into a Monophysite sense, once the Logos took a human nature without an own hypostasis. The merit of Karl Barth and of E. Brunner – the coryphaei of the dialectic school – it is that of reaffirming into the middle of the modern Protestant theology – which started sliding on the slope of the denial of the real embodiment of the Logs - the un-hypostatic doctrine, with all the differences or details which presents.

like?

Of course, by an large, the kenosis consists in the fact that the Son of God has accepted to be subject of the modest human features and manifestations. But, besides this general determination, some clarifications are necessary.

The synods IV from Chalcedon and VI from Constantinople, they affirmed not only that the natures are preserved and have their own "work" in Jesus Christ, but even they are even united "undividedly". This will help us to specify somewhat the sense of the kenosis.

From here it turns out, on one hand, that the Son, by maintaining also into the embodiment state the godlike features and their activity, He did not worked through them separately. The inseparability which the dogma speaks about, it is extended also to the works exercised through the natures by their unique person. The natures are not static entities, of whose inseparability would mean only a persistence of them into joining or into interpenetration, like two physical things. They are possibilities in a perpetual working. So, any work committed by the persons of the embodied Word, it meets in itself a movement committed through the godlike nature and one committed by the human nature.

After embodiment, the Logos has no longer a godlike life separated from the human one. This would be Nestorianism. But neither the human life is separated from the godlike one. All His acts are theandric: divine-human.

Let's take, for example, the act of healing of a blind man through mud glued on his eyelid by Jesus Christ. This act is a whole which consists of a work done by the human nature and of one done by the godlike one. The movement of the hand after mud, the gluing on the eyes, they are the work of human nature, but the flux of power which through the hand

flooded the eyes of the blind man, it is the work of godlike nature. Here is not about a mixing of the works; neither the human work or the godlike one lose their character¹⁰².

the mixture or the fusion takes place when the two parts lose their character by giving something new or by being lost at least one, like, for example, into the mixing of the Hydrogen with the Oxygen. A kenosis in the sense of the renouncing, on all the line, to the activation of godlike features doesn't either take place, because then Jesus could not heal the blind man in the wonderful manner. S. Bulgakov, in order to get rid of this difficulty, he affirms that all the wonders were done by Jesus not because He was God too, so with self power, but like One Who was receiving, like a prophet, power from God like from a external

¹⁰² Saint John of Damascus says: "His human activity wasn't deprived of the godlike activity and His Godlike activity wasn't deprived of His human activity, but each of them is considered together with the other one". *The Dogmatic*, translated in Romanian language by Dr. D. Fecioru, Bucharest, 1928, Chapter. XIX, p. 216. "The Godhead was doing the wonders, but wasn't doing them without body; the body, the humble one, but not without godhead", Chapter XVI, p. 199. "Though, by no means we mix the ones which He has done in undivided manner, but we know out of the quality of the deeds to which nature belonged every deed", Chapter XVI, p. 200. "The power of doing wonders it was the activity of His godhead; but the work with the hands, to want, to say: «I want», «clean you of», it was the activity of his humanity". "Because like we know the natures are united, and they have interpenetration one into another and we do not deny their difference, but we count them and we know that they are inseparable, likewise we know also the union of the wills and of the activities, but after resurrection and after His glorification («it has been given to me all the power into the heaven and on the earth»)", Chapter XV, p. 193.

subject¹⁰³. It is right that everything the Son does, He does it in connection with the Father, like receiving it from the Father. This is His the hypostatic character. On this way He works in heaven. But Jesus says that this power He has it not because He is man, but because He is One with the Father (Jo. 10, 11), like God. "Everything the Father does, also the Son does likewise" (Jo. 5, 19), just because He is Son. The Son affirms very explicitly that He has inside Him, like Son of God, the power to forgive the sins¹⁰⁴.

¹⁰³ "The character and the content of the wonders of the prophets it is the same with the one of the wonders of Jesus Christ, though into a more reduced degree. The prophets worked wonders through the power of the prayer and of the Holy Ghost Who was resting upon them. This was their preaching, exercised not through word, but through deed, the proof of the godlike power upon them... into the wonders of Christ from the days of His earthly service it doesn't manifest the «imperial» power upon the world, of which He disrobed Himself by entering the world, and by only receiving it only after His ascent and extolling", W. c. p. 363.

¹⁰⁴ **KARL ADAM**, Jesus Christus, Augsburg, 1933: "We have also records on many wonders done by the prophets. But all of these deeds of power were produced with the invocation and in the name of the Almighty. Right this misses to Jesus: that His wonders are not presenting like results of praying, but like natural irradiations of His own being. Not from the Father, but from Him it starts the work with its effect: «I will, be you clean» (Mk. 1, 41). Not empowerment, but almightiness is here" (p. 213). This thing is affirmed, otherwise, explicitly, also by the *Anathemas IX* of Saint Cyril from Alexandria: "If somebody says that the One Lord Jesus Christ was glorified by the Holy Ghost, using His power like an external power and that from the Holy Ghost He took the power to work against the unclean ghosts, and the fulfillment of the wonders among people, and that one doesn't say that, a contrary, also the Holy Ghost through Him worked the wonders as His own: le that one be anathema". In conformity with dr. Olimp N. Căciulă, *The Anathemas of Saint Cyril of Alexandria* ("Romanian Orthodox Church", March-April 1937, p. 236).

But not only in the wonderful deeds was showed the active presence of the Godhead through human nature, without modifying it, but in all was doing and was telling, in all the time spent among people by Jesus Christ, was something which, without modify His humanity, was showing that it is in Him more than humanity. The crowds remained overwhelmed by His speeches. "Nobody has talk like this in Israel", was whispering the people. His word was human, but both the content and the atmosphere in which was shrouded, was something more than human. His behavior was human, and though, it was a behavior like hasn't before and can has it any human.

Thereby, through kenosis we believe that must be understood this interweaving of godhead nature into its existence and activity with the human nature, showing to the people the godhead not else but through the humble form of God, and to other persons of the Holy Trinity not separated, but into a whole with the human nature¹⁰⁵. The kenosis mustn't be understood, by any

¹⁰⁵ Maxim the Confessor says: "None of the nature which He was hypostasis to, were activated in a separate way from the another. Through each one the another was made more obvious. Being truly one and another, like God He was the one Who was moving the humanity, and like man the one who was unveiling His own Godhead. He was suffering in a godlike manner, so to say, because He was willingly suffering, because He wasn't a simple man and He was doing wonders, because He was doing them through His body, because He wasn't God unveiled. As the sufferings are wonderful and renewed through the godlike power of the nature of the One Who was suffering, and the wonders suffered, being fulfilled through the suffering power of the One Who was doing them", Migne G. P. 91, 105 B. "Like Gregory the Theologian says (word 45): He didn't do the godlike works in a divine way, but through His body mentally animated and united with Himself, according to the hypostasis. Not through unveiled godhead, like before. Neither did Him the human works in a human way. Because He was doing them

means, in the sense of that, besides what is human, there wasn't manifested any presence of the godlike nature.

Let's take the different features by turn, in order to see what their activity became through embodiment. To the almightiness, God did not give up, because we saw that Jesus was doing acts which exceeded the powers of natures. In principle, the almightiness is the feature

according to His will, the one unlimited in power, and not subjected to any need. The suffering wasn't in His case the fulfillment of any punishment, like it is to us, but it was kenosis of the Logos embodied for us". Maxim the Confessor, Migne G. P. 91, 120 B. "Through an infinite desire for people He became Himself, in a truly and existential way, the desired object, not suffering anything in His own being due to this unspoken kenosis, neither losing anything from the human nature through this unspeakable assuming of it", Migne P. 91, 104. Christ's sufferings as man, namely the manifestations of the kenosis, they aren't only human, says Maxim the Confessor, because they are received freely, for the love for people. The liberty which Jesus obeys them with, it gives them a godlike character. The kenosis, so, it isn't an actual kenosis, which blocks the presence of godhead, but it is a manifestation of the liberty and of the divine love. It is another way of revelation of God. Behold how H. U. von Balthazar (*Die Komische Liturgie*, p. 250) summarizes, very appropriately, the thought of Saint Maximos the Confessor: "Into the identity of the divine humiliation and of superhuman form which He suffers in, it is accomplished the unification of the contrasts. Because, the divine kenosis is that «supra-infinite power», which is both liberty and love, and which makes possible to God «that through an infinite desire for man to become truly and existentially the object of His desire». And this, without renouncing to His liberty, because this «emptying done for us» it is only a clue and a revelation of an «infinitely powerful majesty». Precisely this place of God's emptying it is also the one of the most godlike godhead, the one of eternal liberty and supreme love".

which God does all He wants through, but to us it is made obvious especially by the victory over the laws of the nature, which seem to us as being the ultimate power. It is true that not on each moment Jesus Christ was doing wonders. The power of God consists also of sustaining the nature's laws. He didn't come to continuously fight the laws of nature. But this thing, forming the permanent habit and not arising with interruptions, it cannot be seen intuitively like having its cause beyond the laws of nature. Who, instead, has the power to suspend a law, by placing in the same time a being or a thing into another law, or by restoring the power of a law over a being who escaped from under it – like it is the case of bringing back of dead man – it is obvious that it demonstrates that the laws of the nature are kept through His power. Jesus Christ had and was exercising also the power of sustaining the natural laws, but, because these ones exist permanently, the exercise of this power wasn't not seen at Him. He showed it only for a few times, as much as to be sufficient. The man would need to be placed on the godlike spiritual plan of life in order to see what the nature's laws existence was depending on Jesus Christ like. They who saw Jesus, they didn't see the pure spiritual reverse, the one that was interior to His activity. But from His depths it started an non-felt power, a quiet one - like everything that is habit and continuation -, of the sustaining of the world. And this power wasn't exercised only through the human nature, though all the efficiency was due to it. It started from the candlestick of the human nature, of which power, as much as it was, it was still kept in permanent togetherness with the godlike one, by Jesus. Jesus felt also the human power besides the godlike one, whereas it was an effort. That, it wasn't disappearing into His self-evidence about Himself.

In any other regard, the exercising of the divine

power was depending on His will. This is the dogmatic sense of the almightiness, in order to be saved the God's character as Person. Jesus Christ didn't use it even in His most tragic moments, and this was due to His will, put into the service of the goal which He was following through His love. Otherwise, in love there is also power. To this we will return a little later. The same are the thing in the case of His supra-temporality and supra-spatiality. These features mean, on one hand, the He isn't submitted to the time and to the space, and on the other hand that the time and the space obey Him. Therefore, they express the power of God to be independent of time and space, and not His need for staying outside them. The time and the space cannot be considered like being outside the presence of God. This would be a limitation of Him. God enters, if He wants, the time too, without losing by this His situation as superior to the time. Whereas He made Himself subject of the human nature, He entered the time and the space, He has conditioned, voluntarily, His actions on these, but just that was spatial and temporal from His acts, as much as He can transpose through the human nature. But, besides that, His godlike acts reached the super-temporal and the super-spatial, or started from there, being determined in both human and godlike manner¹⁰⁶. Through His humanity flooded into history the godlike energies, of course, not in a physical form, like the Protestants distort such a belief, but through the human spirit

¹⁰⁶ **KARL ADAM**, W. c.: "All the human elevated features grow up rather directly from the existentiality and His supra-earthly destination" (p. 207); "His earthly life is only the representation, the prolongation or, rather, the spatial-temporal transparent of this eternal, ultimate reality. His own and deep ground is the kingdom of the unseen, of the supra-earthly, of the godlike, there is the throne of the One old of days. In His person the eternity erupts in time, the supra-historical in the plan of the history, the godlike into the human" (p. 197).

which receives, freely and with faith, the word and the power of the word from Jesus Christ. The form, the visible and verifiable instrument, like any reality from the bosom of our world, through which come these energies, and, in the first place the belief about the presence of God, it is human, but the content, to be experienced in another way than the natural one, it is godlike. Therefore, not the verifiable form or contribution are the godhead, one may say that this remains supra-historical, but, because in this form, through this environment that conveys the godhead, the godhead is present and works, and that descended into history and revealed Himself, influencing the history.

We must say a special word about the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and about His self conscience, in which He is, like into a whole, and what can be given by the human nature, but also what the godlike nature brings. It is the most difficult part of this problem. It seems that through kenosis, in the sense of a gradual outpouring of the divine knowledge into the human knowledge candlestick with the growing of this one. In what concerns His conscience, in any case, from His early childhood, He clearly knew that He is the Son of God in Whose home it is His place. As Christ was growing up "in wisdom and age", the pot of His conscience was becoming more and more capable to catch and transmit the light of the divine knowledge, into which, otherwise, He was bathed and, in braiding with the elevations of His human cogitation, He was seeing the unspoken mysteries of all the things.

Jesus wasn't wobbling in His knowledge like the people are; it was not observed at Him a progress or a rectification in what He speaks. Everything He said it is ultimate and clear truth, it is absolute certitude, from the first moment of His apparition in the public arena. It is a godlike vision and knowledge, caught into the

human shapes of knowledge and expression. These shapes are the ones which progress with the age: the capacity of the human nature to catch and express the divine wisdom¹⁰⁷. The works of both natures they meet into a whole, without the light of the godlike nature to remove the human organ of knowing and its work.

If only the human shapes of the knowledge grow up, but a divine vision still persists from the beginning, the self conscience of His theandric nature Jesus had it in a sure conviction, but not poured into precise

¹⁰⁷ Almost all church fathers, except the ones from the Antioch school, they reject the idea of any error or real ignorance in Jesus Christ. Though, almost all of them admit a progress of the knowledge after the human nature. “Mit Ausnahme der Antiochener gaben nur wenige Väter einen Irrtum oder rein wirkliches Nichtwissen in Christus zu“, says Dr. Johann Lenz (Jesus Christus nach der Lehre des hl. Gregor von Nyssa, Trier, 1925, p. 81). But Gregory of Nyssa says that the same one who admits a progress of the human nature also in what concerns the knowledge, but, because, by and large, into the person of Jesus there is also the divine knowledge, that progress refers to the human shapes of comprising and expressing of the divine vision: “Er stellt nur sinnen allgemeinen Fortschritt im Leben Jesu muss sich finden; den wenn er eine vernünftige menschliche Seele halte, so musste sie ihre Kräfte betätigen können; das gehört zur Vollkommenheit der Seele... Dass er dort (Luk 2, 52) unter Fortschritt einen inhaltlichen Verstande kann man nicht beweisen. Es genügt ein der Wissensform nach neues Wissen oder eine zunehmende Kundgebung der schon vorhandenen Weisheit anzunehmen” (p. 83). Reminding about the evangelical places, in which Jesus says that He doesn't know about the day of judgment or where Jesus went towards the fig tree while not knowing that it hadn't any fruits, Saint Gregory of Nyssa finds in fact a nescience of Christ. (Wir haben hier tatsächlich eine Schwäche Christi, nämlich einen menschlichen Natur zu zusprechen und es ist zu zugeben, dass die Natur Gottes, in der Vereinigung mit den menschlichen *παθήματα* unveränderlich und leidenschaftslos geblieben ist“. Migne, G. P. 45, 1173 C., Lenz, p. 83).

shapes from the beginning. When Jesus says about something that He does not know, it is probably that His human shapes of knowledge weren't enough, or He didn't wanted to humanly catch a divine and deep knowledge which He actually had it. The kenosis of the knowledge would be thus a bearing of the human mind weakness, which develops gradually.

We cannot claim to know and understand the depths which lead to the supra-temporal from within the existence of Jesus Christ. But we know what He was showing to the people, as much as He was showing to them¹⁰⁸. Towards people went out in plain sight especially the aspect of the kenosis, of the humbleness of the Son of God. To the people the almightiness of Jesus it wasn't shown directly, because this would have put a too large distance between God and they and it couldn't have been accomplished the goal of their salvation. His godhead must be approached by Jesus into the man's countenance, into an interweaving with the human nature, with the emerge of it on foreground, in order to be able to show them the love. The people can't bear the uncovered sight of God. Because of their helplessness and in order to enter the communion with them, He subjected Himself to the kenosis. The Son of God shrouded His almightiness into Its manifestation towards people, into the bearable means of the human shapes, like it is shrouded a too much powerful light into a fabric which tempers its intensity, though inside it is activated in fullness.

If all the existence of Jesus consists into an

¹⁰⁸ It is a profound truth into the words of Saint Athanasius that we know God only because He revealed us Himself, and from there further He is covered by the wings of the Cherubim. According to: D. Karl Bornhausen, *Das Wirken des Christus durch Taten und Worte*, Güterschloh, 1924, p. 223.

interweaving of the work of the divine nature with the one of the human nature, only into us will stay the cause that we see more the human nature's part into the whole that Jesus Christ is. It was a benevolence of God that He interweaved His godlike work with the human nature. Into this it stays the objective side of the kenosis. But the objective kenosis is projected into our subjectivity, which is not able to see, but very little, the godhead of Jesus Christ, into features even more intense.

Our subjectivity has, however, also another contribution to highlighting the kenosis. And the adding of this subjectivity is not only something illusionary, but it is a real enlargement of the kenosis, a real sufferance of Jesus Christ. But, though, it is a kenosis only in front of us. In Himself, it is a triumph of the godhead. Through our sin we are deepening even more the Embodied Word into humiliation. And though, this humiliation received by Him from us, it is a supreme manifestation of the godlike love in report with the man.

Let us explain it: All the godlike features start from love and serve to it. It is explained that into love they are concentrated through love. The almightiness of God it is not manifested like something different, like at the man who hasn't any other goal but to show that he is mighty. The man, when he manifests his power, he does it, usually, like a manifestation of the vainglory, of egotism. To manifest your power towards a man, otherwise than through love, like a natural emanation of love, it is not to be into a love relation with him, it is to consider him at your own disposition, un-contained into love. It seems, nevertheless, that the true power even towards nature it is manifested into and through love and God is strong towards it because He loves it. Through love He created and He sustains all the things.

In any case, the almightiness of God towards man,

if God wants to remain in conformity to the meaning of His creation – He created the man like a free being, for communion – and to save him, He will manifest Himself through love. Only in the Old Testament God manifested His love somewhat directly. His power's manifestation through love it is more conform with the being of God, which is the free personal communion with the free will of the man. Of course that means a restraint of the divine almightiness, because the love doesn't want to compel anybody, no matter how much conquering force it is in it. But it is a voluntary restriction, if God wants to exist in his front free beings and not simple objects. In any love there is a self-restriction, a kenosis, because there it is a renouncing to the direct power, which reduces to the object what it is in its front. The alternatives to God are: or direct almightiness, with the reducing to the object of all it is outside Him, or a passing of His power through the love which is a restriction of the exclusivist affirmation, a restraint of the power, an admission of other free beings, a descending on their level in order to make the communion possible. A kenosis of His, God admitted even from the creation of the man. And, though, if the direct manifestation of the power on all the line - in God's case, the almightiness manifestation is a sign that everything is considered like things, so that the one who behaves like that he is on the inferior stage of a egotistic being - the God's superiority it is shown just into this kenosis. (Properly-said, God does not gain this superiority through the creation of the world, but He also reveals it, because He has it into His eternal tri-personal communion).

If God wants to save the man, to raise him at the state of communion with Him, and for this goal He made Himself man, He won't manifest Himself in His reports with the people but through the restriction of the direct power, by manifesting the power through

love. And, by doing so, God showed His true superiority. All His features, through which He exceeds the relative, the human, the conditioned, He didn't manifest them directly, because in that case He would not let to the man place for free respiration, but the man would be reduced to the state of an object; He manifested His features through love. But if the people had seen the profoundness of the godlike love, they would have seen how from it are flowing the effluvia of all His godlike features and activities. If somebody objects by saying: how comes that the people did not feel these effluvia, and they even didn't see them with spiritual eyes, we will answer him: there are not felt the effluvia of the power of God present everywhere. The cause stays into the spiritual insensibility of the man. The ones who are imparted with the gift of the knowledge of Jesus Christ through faith, they see also His active godhead.

The love of Jesus, like any other love actually, it was not experienced and understood from outside, but only by entering the communion report with Him, through the step of the faith. The love is through itself humbleness or humbleness too, by being a reducing of the exclusive egotism, the admission of the others' existence on an equal level with the own subject and the searching for their love. Who responds to somebody's love, he does not see the act of humbleness, of humiliation. But when there is no other response, the behavior of the man who walks with love, seeking the others' community, it appears to others as all humiliating.

So appeared Jesus to whom didn't enter the communion with Him, in order to understand, to see the profoundness, the glory, the brightness of His love, and to see His human nature. And most of them were like that. This was because people refused the love, the behavior of Jesus seemed without honor and absurd. They thought that the godhead stays into the direct

power manifestation, into the proud affirmation above all and above everything, according with their sin which consist into pride, into reducing everything to the level of the objects. Their sinful judgment was throwing a veil of even bigger kenosis over the voluntary humiliation of the descending of the Son of God to His state of a man, which, in fact, it was the manifestation of the whole divine love. If people had seen this magnitude of the divine love and they had gathered themselves around Him with love and with veneration, like they have done after His resurrection, the kenosis of the Son of God would not have consisted but only into the fact of coming close to the man, to enter the communion with the man. But, because people were making vacuum around Him, and He was supporting this situation, the increase of the kenosis it hadn't had only a subjective character, but it meant an objective increasing of the kenosis, though through the attitude of the people¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁹ This idea of the kenosis, like having its origin in the human subjectivity, it is characteristic to the Alexandrian school, to which Maxim the Confessor was into "Centurias" a faithful interpreter (According to Hans Urs von Balthazar, *Die "Gnostischen Centurien" des Maximus Confessor*, Fr. i. br., 1941, p. 39 and others). Behold some quotes from Maxim the Confessor in this respect: "The Lord Doesn't appears equal to everyone. To the beginner, «in the form of a servant»; to the ones who ascend on the Mount of Transfiguration, «in the form which He had before the world was». To everyone, after the size of his faith". (Gnostic Centurias 2, chapter 13, Balthazar, cited work, p. 42). "The Logos appears under two forms: one is exoteric: «He hadn't either face, or beauty» (Isaiah 53, 2), the other is esoteric, the glory of the Tabor: «More beautiful to His face like all the sons of the earth». The first one is for the beginners, the second one for the consummated ones. The first one it is the resembling of the first Parousia, of the letter and deed, the second is the anticipation of the second Parousia, of the Ghost and the Gnosis", (Centurias 1, chapter 97;

But, just through the suffering of this humiliating situation from the part of the people, of the increasing of His real kenosis, God-the Word manifested even more fully the depth of His godlike love. The kenosis is, like we see, a dialectic concept. It is the manifestation of the God's glory among people; as the kenosis increases, it increases the manifestation of the divine glory too, which has the love like central feature. How would us have been able to see the whole depth of the God's love, if He hadn't endured the kenosis, which was, on one hand, a godlike initiative, and on the other hand, in a great measure, the man's addition? Into the state of supreme kenosis, like a supreme affirmation of the God's love towards people, the focal point of all the other godlike features and words, the divine Logos does not get out, so, from the communion with the Father, because this is maintained also through love. Just because He is full of love towards the Father, the Son affirms His love towards the people into the supreme degree of the kenosis. So, He is not deprived, into His divine – human depths, of the happiness of the communion with the Father, even if, on the other hand, He is grieved because the people refuse His love. Jesus Christ was both in the plenitude of the happiness and into kenosis, in the same time. From the depths of the happy communion with the Father, Christ took the power to suffer the sorrows of the kenosis in report with the people, and of the vacuum which they made around Him.

The dialectic character of the kenosis it is highlighted by the Holy Scripture through the

Balthazar, the cited work, p. 41). "The Logos like a spiritual Son ascends and descends, after the degree of virtue and gnosis of everyone. It is happy, the one to whom it stays in place in the sky like to Joshua, until he defeated all the bad demons" (Centurias 2, 31; Balthazar, the cited work, p. 37).

contradictory affirmations – which couldn't be explained otherwise – about the state of humiliation in which the Son of God was on earth and, in the same time, about the godlike powers which He kept and about the unity with the Father in which He was on the earth too.

In this respect it can be explained also the famous place from Philippians 2: 5–11. Even it would seem, taken in itself, like without any reference to other places with a contrary sense, it speaks about a non-dialectical kenosis, about a real abandonment of the godlike features and powers, by the Son of God.

The text speaks about Jesus Christ, “who being in the form of God, not kidnapping, He is considered to be just like God, but poured Himself, by taking the form of a servant..., for that also God Has highly exalted Him and gifted Him a name which is above all names”, etc.

The expression: “Who was in the image of God”, it obviously refers to the Logos from before the embodiment, according to the opinion of the great majority of the exegetes, and it doesn't refer to the One from after the embodiment, because that One has changed “the godlike form” for the “servant form”. “The godlike form” which He has changed it is interpreted by the most of the commentators not like the godlike being, but like the imposing appearance, like its glory. This was changed by the Logos with the non-imposing form of the man, servant of God. “To be just like God” it would mean, according to the exegetes, exactly what it means also “God's image”.

Big it is the discussion in what concerns the word “kidnap”. O. Bensow gives six possible meanings of it, each of these meanings being accepted by one or another of the exegetes:

- an act of kidnapping (actus rapiendi);
- means through the kidnapping is done (Mittel zum Entführung);

- thing which have to be kidnapped (res rapienda);
- kidnapped thing (res rapta);
- thing which have to be retained (res retinenda);
- found thing (res inventa).

Bensow thinks like being probable the second and the third meanings and less probable the fifth one, but the first, the fourth and the sixth, they are certainly improbable.

According to the second sense, the sentence would sound like this: the Son of God didn't considered, before His embodiment, the equality with God like "a means to kidnap" the people's honoring, to come into the godlike form in order to force people to worship Him, but He came humiliated and in the form of a servant and on this way He gained their veneration, by arriving to consider Him "Lord" of all of them. Before the embodiment neither any creature knew about the Son, nor worshipped Him, and He didn't looked for showing them His divine majesty in order to force them to recognize Him.

According to the third meaning, the sentence would be understood in this way: The Son of God didn't consider, before the embodiment, that He has to kidnap the recognition of His godlike dignity from the people, like something that have to be kidnapped from them (res rapienda), but He humiliated Himself by making Himself a man, so that, voluntarily, they recognized Him this dignity by being just like the Father is.

According to the fifth meaning of the word, a less probable one, the sentence would show that Jesus in His pre-existence wouldn't have wanted to retain at any all cost the state, of being just like the Father, but He renounced to it and He humiliated Himself.

Agreeing what Bensow said, that the senses number four and six do not match at all the ideas connection of the sentence, we are noticing that the number two and three meanings do not oppose the meaning which we

give to the kenosis, like it will be seen further on.

Bensow, however, he placed them into interpretations which have some insufficiencies. Especially the fact that, out of all of them, the Son appears too much preoccupied to impose Himself to people like being just like God. Whether Ansell of Canterbury reduced the meaning of the embodiment too much to the thirst of the Father for the repairing His honor, the Benson's interpretations put an accent, unjustified by Scripture, on the tendency of the Son's apotheosis in front of the creature. The Son would have been embodied only because this had been the most appropriate way to be recognized by the creation. It is true that consequently to His embodiment and sacrifice, the Son has gained the highest place into the honor of the creation, a name above all names, but this is the gratitude, it is the coronation of a work which didn't directly intended to gain this thing. The humbleness of Jesus Christ, of Whose praise forms the heart of the sentence, for being shown to the reader of the epistle, it becomes, after the interpretations of Bensow, a simple methodic camouflaging of the Son, in order to reach the so much desired target of His recognition and glorification from the man's part.

The true sense of the expression "not kidnapping considered to be just like God" it seems to us as being the one which is much less remote from what emerges directly, non-masterly, from the grammatical and syntactic construction of the text. Let's just pronounce the word "kidnapping", in an accentuated manner, like the apostle wants through the previous place which he gives to it and to reconstitute the character of a noun of the construction "to be just like God", how it is in the original text. Let's say, therefore: "not kidnapping considered the state of God" and the true meaning will emerge by itself. The Son has not interpreted the state of God like as consisting into the

kidnapping of power, a constraining one, into an act of kidnapping. The godhead consists of something else, namely of love. This interpretation escapes the supposition of some ellipsis in expression. (Bensow has affirmed that the expression is elliptical, and he didn't consider the equality with God like means of kidnapping the honoring of the people or he has not considered the equality to God as something which has to be kidnapped from people. Kidnapping can be interpreted thereby like substantively attribute like it is intentioned into the text. (Parallel: not lordship considered the state of king). Thereby we don't need to transform the word kidnapping in order to understand it.

And the word "considered", if it is a judgment of the Son before the embodiment, it has an eternal character. The Son didn't not see the godhead, like we people do, in constraint, in direct almightiness like towards objects, but in love. If the godhead hadn't consisted of love, He wouldn't have embodied Himself. But (for the godhead consists of love, and for He considered the godhead as consisting of love) He emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant. Only by interpreting this sentence like this, the embodiment has a more profound reason in godhead and not a simple wish of the Son for being recognized by the people. Only on this way the human nature, which He has assumed, it didn't imply a need for changing of the human being, or at least of the human being's works. The adversative but (ἀλλά) from the sentence, it expresses an overturning of our opinions about the being of the godhead and, just because of that, it doesn't produce any change of the human nature through embodiment, but it produces a confirmation of the human nature. The Son didn't confirm the opinion that the godhead consists of a direct almightiness, but He showed that the godhead consists of love and, for that, He didn't manifest Himself among us, in the form

of His almightiness, but emptied Himself, meaning that He remained in accord with the godlike being.

Though, towards people, the godhead is not compelled to manifest Himself through love. Because the people are creatures, by the nature of the things, God is in an almightiness report with the people and He appears to them like this. But, through benevolence, He places Himself towards people in a report of love, according to His internal nature. So, there was needed free “discernment” from the Son, consequently eternal and explicated through the being of the God Himself, in order no longer to appear them into an aspect of an overwhelming almightiness.

Thereby, by being the embodiment a consequence of the way of being of the Son into His own godhead, like intentionality towards communion, He forsook *τό εἶναι ἰσα θεῷ*, His godlike state.

Though, because towards people He appeared in a form of almightiness, this being “the appearance of God the Almighty in front of the creature”, He turned also His love to them, by taking the familiar and close image of the man, and not into contradiction with, but appropriate to the godlike being.

“The godlike image” is an aspect of the godhead and it remains so, but, because it is the report of God towards objects and towards people like beings, when His love turns towards them, in order to make them His sons, the godlike “form” is dresses up, it intertwines, it is covered with the “form of a servant”, of man, without abolishing the man, but following to work towards man, through the man. It is therefore a difference between “images”, and the adversative particle “ἀλλά” (but) expresses also this report, but not a report of excluding one through another, but by of a intimate togetherness, on the basis of a profound reason, indicated by the eternal life of the Holy Trinity. The ones from the people who can see in the depth of

the divine love manifested in “the image of a servant”, they can at least partially see His godhead and, so, the almightiness and the brightness of the Creator in front of the creature, “the image of God”.

In the meaning which we give thereby to “the image of God” and the report with “the image of a servant”, even if it would take the second meaning of the word (means of kidnapping), it can be framed, and it can be subordinated to the first meaning. In fact, God comprises a complexity of meanings, and not only one alone, without they contradicting one another. Thereby, the sentence would sound like this, subsuming the second meaning (the one which refers to “the image of God in report with the people”) to the first meaning (referred to the internal godlike life): Who being towards people in report of almighty God with the creature, He didn't consider that the state of God in itself it consists of constraining force, but it consist of love, and therefore, to didn't manifest in an unveiled manner His godlike report with the creature, in order to snatch the veneration from the people, but, by wanting to enter the communication with them, He turned the love towards them, by crossing Himself this appearance of His, through love, and by consequently taking a human form, which He interweaved with the godlike one, according to His being indication.

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The Son of God, by making Himself human in order to come in a maximum closeness to us, He has remained in the same time God, in the fullest actuality, for in communion with the man Jesus to experience the communion with God Himself like ultimate transcendence which sets a border to our passions, and it amplifies our positive powers. The Protestant kenosis thwarts the meaning of the embodiment like an overflowing of the divine energies into the world

and into history.

The possibility of the dwelling into the same hypostasis, of the human and of the godlike features of the works, though difficult to understand in details, it is given in the man's conformity to God and, in general, in the fact that between Him and world, like a reality created and sustained by Him, it takes place a continuous union, actually worn by the divine Subject, like the ultimate source and sustainer of His uncreated energies, and of the created energies of the world. In fact, God is the ultimate Subject of the entire divine and created reality, without any of the two losing something of its character. Rightfully, the Holy Fathers widened the meanings of the Chalcedonian terms: "not separated" and "unmixed", by applying them to the general report between God and the world.

A more familiar analogy of the union of the two natures into Jesus Christ, without a real kenosis of the godlike nature, it is offered also by the union of the soul with the body into a unique person. We do not renounce to the activation of our soul's features by the fact that the soul is united, at us, with the body. The depth of the soul beyond space, beyond time and beyond expression, it can coexist with the limitations of the body worn by the same subject.

VI.

The Consequences of the Hypostatic Union

VI. 1. The Communication of the Features

Out of the union of the two natures into the Person of the God—the Word, there turn out some consequences which express in more details the same fact. The first consequence of the hypostatic union is the features communication, which takes places from a nature to the other one into the unity of the person. Through the fact that Jesus Christ is a single person in two natures and the person is the bearer of the features and of the subject of all acts and sufferings, we can call this person sometime through His godlike side, by attributing it to the human features and acts and, vice versa, we can call Him through His human side, by attributing it the godlike features and acts. It can be said: “The Son of God has shed His blood on the Cross” or “Man Jesus is from before eternity”.

There doesn't takes place any direct communication from the godlike nature to the human one. It can't be said that the godhead of Jesus suffered on cross, or that His godhead hungered, or that the humanity is present everywhere.

The communication of the features, understood like that, it is another expression of the dogma about the union of the two natures into a person, without changing themselves, but without being separated.

This dogma sets the right limit to the kenosis of the godlike nature and to the human nature deification.

The communication of the features must be defined like an mediation between two poles. It does not mean modifying the natures, but it is not only a nominal communication of features and works. Neither of the

natures gains existentially a feature of the another nature. The godlike nature does not become suffering; neither the human nature becomes wonder working. Nevertheless, there is produced a connection between the human nature's suffering and the godlike nature, like it is produced also a real connection between the wonderworking power of the godlike nature and the human nature. Whereas the two natures form together a single hypostatic centre, and this centre bears the suffering of the human nature elevating it and purifying it, into a real mode, it can be said that it bears this suffering, like something being existentially foreign, but in the same time being functional, and proper, to the godlike nature too. The new elements which the human suffering penetrates the unique hypostasis with, they come out of the godlike nature. It feels into Jesus Christ that the humanity's support has a divine character.

But also the inverse, whereas the wonderworker subject through the godlike nature, He is also a human nature's expression, through Him it is being felt the presence of this nature in working the miracles, as this nature participating to that work, thereby being possible to rightly attribute the wonderworking also to the human nature.

Through subject, thus, it is established a real, a functional connection, between each nature from within the subject, and the features and the works of the other nature. Due to the common hypostasis is maintained, therefore, both the unchanging of the two natures, and their real communication which the isolation is being avoided through. The hypostasis saves both the union and the non-mixing of the natures, without the hypostasis being something existentially different from the two natures.

For the most conclusive illustration of the features communication, a real features communication but

without annulling the two natures, we are repeating here a quote from Saint Maximos the Confessor, used also when we talked about the problem of the kenosis:

“No nature of the ones which He was hypostasis to, it separately activated the other nature. Each one made the other obvious. By really being in both natures, like God He moved the humanity, and like man He was unveiling His own godhead. He was godlike suffering, so to speak, for He was suffering voluntarily, for He was not a simple man and He was working wonders as man, for He was working the wonders through his human body, and for He wasn't a unveiled God, so that the sufferings are wonderful and renewed through the human power of the natures of the One Who was suffering, and the wonders suffered, being fulfilled through the suffering power of the body of the One who was doing them”¹¹⁰.

Something analogue we find in the human nature constitution, where the soul, even he doesn't gain the features and the material works of the body, he stays into a connection with them, by bearing them through the person's unity and by imprinting into them His seal, and vice versa, the body is making itself bearer and determinant factor of the soul's features and acts.

When one speaks about the features communication, the hypostasis has not to be considered like something detached by the natures from which is formed, thereby, attributing to the hypostasis named from the godlike side the features of the human nature, do not be understood something else but the bearer of them brings also the title, but the only the title: the divine one. The hypostasis is the faces of the two natures in Jesus Christ full of the whole their presence. Thereby, through any human act of Jesus Christ, we see His godlike face, like divine hypostasis bearer of that act and, together with that

¹¹⁰ G. P. 91, 105 B.

face, we see the presence of the divine nature. The divine nature of Jesus, without launching from itself the divine features and works – into this it consists the unchanging of the natures – by the fact that they are center of the hypostatic center, like is face to the human nature, and this thing is also the face of the godlike nature, the last one is, through the one common face, the bearer of the human features and acts. In all the human appearances and manifestations of Jesus, we see not only the man, but also we see God with His nature and in all His divine manifestations He is not only God, but also the man, and not only like a holder subject, but with His entire active human nature.

When, on the basis of the features communication, we attribute the human features and works to the divine nature, we have in Jesus, especially the aspect of the divine nature's kenosis. And when the human nature is, through the hypostasis considered from the human side, the bearer of the divine features and works, we especially have the aspect of the human nature deification. The kenosis shows us the Son of God suffering, and the deification shows us the Son of Man almighty. Into a wider sense, however, also the kenosis is a deification of the human nature, for the human nature's manifestations carried by God the Word are elevated, in one respect, over the level of the human ones. The suffering of the Word it is a sanctified suffering, unlike that one suffered by any mortal.

We treated the kenosis, in the previous chapter, more minutely. And we are going to analyze the deification in a following chapter.

On the basis of the hypostatic communication, neither a manifestation and work of Jesus Christ is only godlike or human, but all of them are theandric, whereas, if it is done through the human nature, the subject won't only human but he will also be godlike,

and this fact, as we highlighted, it won't bring only a divine title to a human work, but it will bring a divine effective presence, and, if it is done through the divine nature, the subject won't be only divine but also human, and that implies an effective human presence. It is a wonderful thing that this presence of the divine factor into the human work allows itself to be limited by the ontological borders of the human nature, as wonderful it is also that one that the human factor is suffered into the divine work. The godhead makes His presence effective into the human suffering without existentially impropriating this suffering, and without annulling this suffering, and the humanity is present into almightiness without becoming almighty and without harming the almightiness. This mystery proves the consideration which God honors the human nature with, which He hasn't created in order to abolish it, but to consummate it through His presence.

VI. 2. The Supra-Natural Birth of Jesus Christ - the Eternal Virginity of Mary

Another consequence of the hypostatic union is the supernatural birth of Jesus Christ. The Savior didn't appear into the world like a being that was formed entirely from the content of this world. He has existed beforehand like a Subject, therefore like an initiative for a new form of existence. By this fact, and especially through that one that His existence from beforehand it is godlike, He didn't submit Himself to a human initiative in what concerns His coming into the world dressed into a human nature. If that had been the case, He would have ceased to be subject since on the heavenly plan of His existence, and what would have been born out of Mary, he would have been subject only through the divine grace of the man, so not a godlike subject. Over all, the initiative of the salvation

wouldn't have belonged to the godhead, but to the man, and a salvation forced by the man it is not salvation by any means. The Son came into world voluntarily, therefore He came like a divine subject and not forced by some power from the world.

The supernatural birth is not something else but only the expression that the One Who initiated the conception into Virgin Mary, He was the Logos Himself, Who also has conceived Himself like man. He is in the same time active and passive factor to His conceiving and birth. His transposition into a maximum state of passive suffering of the birth, it is watched over by another godlike person, by the Holy Ghost.

Therefore, the teaching about the supernatural birth of Jesus Christ it doesn't prove itself like being a forced piece into the Christian doctrine, with the goal of satisfying only a pious thirst for miraculous, but it is a necessary article in the logic of the full achievement of the Revelation into world. Thereby, the virginity of Mary, which is only the empirical negative side of the supernatural conception of Jesus Christ, it is a Christological dogma. Not admitting that Mary gave birth to Jesus while still remaining a virgin, it means not recognizing that His subject is not the product of the immanence. And this means the denial of the Revelation¹¹¹.

¹¹¹ **E. BRUNNER**, *Der Mittler*, p. 288-292, rejects the virginal birth. He says that the biggest wonder is the fact that God has embodied Himself. This wonder doesn't need another wonder of a "biological" character, in order to explain the way in which the birth happened. Then, whether Jesus has taken the full humanity, He received it on the usual way of the natural conception. The Brunner's considerations don't stand to the arguments from our text. Besides that, Brunner, by rejecting any wonder, any wonderful **how** of the life and of the embodiment of the Jesus, what he can base on, his faith in the fact that Jesus was the Son of God? No matter how much the

Of course, the supernatural birth of Jesus Christ does not imply directly the virginity of Mary for all the time, but only for the fact that She didn't conceived and gave birth to Jesus on the natural way. But his eternal virginity results indirectly from His supernatural birth. The embodiment of the Word, realizing an initiative of God and not of the man, excludes the state of human lust through it is initiated any new human hypostasis. The conceiving of a new man it is done into sin, into lust. From the first moment, the new human hypostasis burdens with the hereditary sin. Into the supernatural conceiving of the Son of God it shows both the heavenly initiative of His embodiment, but also the fact that the Lord, like a man, not emerged from the mud of the hereditary sin.

faith would be an act of daring, of risking, though it has to have some reasons. Otherwise, the faith would totally be an arbitrary act. A renowned Calvinist theologian, Karl Barth, he combats this error of E. Brunner: "The negative attitude of Brunner, of denying the virginal birth, it is not a good enterprise. It extends, like is the case of Althaus too, an equivocal on his entire Christology. The sigh of N. Berdiaev it is also my sigh: «I read the book of Brunner with an extraordinary interest, because I felt in it the tension and the sharpness of the cogitation, the religious pathos. But when I arrive to the place in which Brunner confesses that he doesn't believe in the birth of Jesus Christ from a Virgin, or, at least, that it is indifferent to him, I become sad and the issue starts boring me. Because it seems to me that all that was good in the book it was erased and all it follows it doesn't have any meaning»" (Orient und Occident, Helft, 1929, p. 19). K. Barth sees the reason and the necessity of the birth from a Virgin in the proving of the fact that God initiates the Revelation and the Salvation, and not the man: "Die Jungfrauengeburt bezeichnet dies: dass Gott am Anfang steht, wo wirkliche Offenbarung stattfindet, Gott und nicht die willkürliche Klugheit, Tüchtigkeit oder Frömmigkeit eines Menschen". Karl Barth, Die kirchliche Dogmatik, erster Band, zweiter Halbbad, Zollikon, 1938, p. 199 – 201.

His mission of a Savior of the mankind, through substitutive sacrifice for the sin of others, was asking indeed that He to be sinless¹¹². But the human

¹¹² Saint Maxim the Confessor shows that the prolongation of the sin into the world it is done through the lust which stays at the beginning of the birth. The pain, in the last phase the death, it is the payment for our sinful life, which comes from this lustily beginning. The man, searching to escape the pain and the fear of death, he takes refuge into pleasure, including the pleasure from which a new life takes its beginning. But, instead of escaping the pain and the death, the voluptuousness which he ran at, by being a sin, it brings a new pain and it offers to the death a new victim (G.P. 90, 629 D). (Of course, Saint Maxim the Confessor was able to see also the positive role of the love between sexes). Jesus had His beginning into a birth without the sinful voluptuousness, thereby His life is also clean. But He has taken upon Himself the pain and the death. Only on this way His death, by not being the end of a lustily life, and by not having its origin into a sinful pleasure, it is savior. He has to be born from a Virgin for His life to be savior. Only on this way He could save the people from the vicious circle of pleasure – death – pleasure – death etc. “After the breaking of the commandment, all the people have the pleasure in a natural way like their beginning anticipation and none of them was free of the lustily beginning through pleasure. Thus, all of them were indebted through nature to suffer the suffering and the death which come through them. It was in no way possible to liberate the ones who were tyrannized by the unjust voluptuousness, from the right suffering, and from the totally just death which comes after. For the abolition of the most unfair pleasure and, by its cause, of the most unfair suffering, under which the man was torn apart in a pathetic way, by having the origin of his existence into the corruption of the pleasure and by having his end into the decay of death – for the straightening of the suffering nature – it must be an unfair suffering and death and, in the same time, undetermined by a cause. Undetermined by a cause, like not having a pleasure like an anticipation of the existence. Unfair, like not being the

initiative for a new man, without to be *eo ipso* reconciled, it is indissoluble interweaved with the sinful lust, so that a man born on the natural way he cannot be Savior. For salvation there must be a man into whom the human nature to have a new, clean beginning, like it had it for the first time. The clean beginning, far from being a contrary one, it is the one truly normal to the human nature. The beginning into the lust is a deviation from the norm given to it through creation. Only being reestablished the normal, clean beginning of it, it could be removed its death too, and it could be restored the original immortality¹¹³.

At the birth of Jesus like man, it took place another

consequence of a passionate life. Caught in the middle between the right suffering and death, the suffering and the death would have to totally abolish the unfair origin from the pleasure and the right end through death of the nature, and to become again free of voluptuousness and suffering, re-receiving the clarified nature from the beginning, un-dirtied by the attributes imprinted into the ones who are under the sign of the beginning and of the corruption". Jesus fulfilled this work, He "not having, at all, the pleasure from disobedience like anticipation in time of His birth from woman, and He by His will assumed that pain which, caused by that, it is the end of the nature, due to His love for the people, like suffering unfairly to abolish the origin of the beginning which tyrannized the nature from the unfair pleasure, because the death of the Lord didn't come to Him like a payment which was owed to Him like to the other people, but it came against the sin. Thereby, it abolished the just end of the nature produced through death, not being anymore at Him the pleasure due to which the death penetrated into the nature". (Questiones ad Thalassium, 61, Migne, G.P., 90, 628 D – 629 B). H.U. von Baltazar summarizes on this way the idea of Saint Maximos the Confessor: "To break the dialectic of the sin there were demanded two conditions: a death, which was not a punishment for passion, and, therefore, a birth for a Virgin", W. c. p. 189.

¹¹³ Maxim the Confessor, Qauest. ad Thalass, 63; G.P. 90, 632 D. C.

intervention of God. Only on this way could be taken out the human nature from the vicious and tragic circle of sin and death. If this intervention didn't do a new creation from nothing of the human nature of Jesus, but it gave Him the origin into a Virgin, it is for the humanity of Jesus Christ had to be a part from the communal humanity, which He had the mission to save it. God did not seek to destroy the human nature founded into Adam, but He sought to restore it.

The Birth of the Son of God it cannot be the product of the human initiative, because of having to be an act of heavenly initiative, and there must implicitly be absent from the human contribution all the elements of the lust which is expresses through, in the actual decayed state of the human nature, this human tension for producing a new human individual.

The human being called to be instrument of the heavenly initiative and to save the world, had to know the state of lust related to the tendency after procreation. And such a state cannot be free but into the purity, in the absolute virginity.

If Mary hadn't been Virgin when she conceived the Son of God, she could have mixed, through memory, in Her state, the human lust, awakened before.

But also after the Birth, Her motherly report with the Child born into virginal purity, it had to remain clean of any lust; She had to remain Virgin into Her entire existence as Mother of Jesus Christ, because the connection between mother and child is so intimate that after the birth takes place a continuous soul transmission from Her to Him¹¹⁴.

It was told that the femininity represents, by itself,

¹¹⁴ It could be recognized also the opposite fact: Jesus, by being not only the child of Mary, but also of Her God, He was transmitting to Her, at His turn, the sanctifying power which guarded Her continuously into virginity.

the passive part, the receptive part of the mankind, unlike the manly element, which is initiative and lofty confidence in its own power. Therefore, by the simple fact of Her femininity, Mary would have corresponded to the embodiment of the Logos by divine initiative¹¹⁵.

In fact, this should have been the report of the Cosmos, in general, towards God, its Creator. But, the man diverted the existence from its structure.

Only into the woman it was preserved this structure of the creation like being an instrument at the disposition of God.

But Mary made possible the realization of the embodiment, like a full initiative of God, especially through her full virginity, through the lack of sinful lust.

It is understood that, by attributing to God the whole initiative in the act of the embodiment, we do not reduce the role of the Mary to an inert passivity. In the limits of the receptivity, of the obedience, there still is a possibility of an intense participation. Virgin Mary places Herself with the whole Her being at the disposition of God, being only obedience, only purity, and only serving.

The One born from Virgin Mary, by not being the product of an autonomous human initiative, He was not an autonomous human hypostasis. The humanity of Jesus Christ, though individual, it did not constitute an own hypostasis, but it started to form under the divine hypostasis care. Therefore, it was not separated itself from the general human nature through an act from its content, but through the divine hypostasis's impulse.

Due to this fact, it was an actual humanity, an

¹¹⁵ Dr. RUDOLF GRABER, *Maria im Gottgeheimnis der Schöpfung*, Regensburg, 1940: „In Maria ist das All in seine seins massige Stellung des Empfangenden und damit des Weiblichen zurückgekehrt“, (p. 21).

individual one, but not into the individual.

According to John Damascene: “the humanity which the Word has taken, by embodying Himself, it is not an abstract humanity, neither is an actual humanity like that existing in all the people taken collectively, but it is an individual humanity, which it is not, though, by itself an individual, a person, not being individual and a person except into the Word and through the Word”¹¹⁶.

The Son of God hadn't taken the nature existing into an own individual, because this would have meant, on one hand, that He hadn't made Himself man, but He had united Himself with a man, and on the other hand, by taking a human individual, it would have been closer to him than by all the other human persons.

The *hypostasis* establishes *an own domination* on what is *common*. Jesus has taken the human nature, about which we all can say that it is *ours*, and He didn't take a human individual, who makes from the

¹¹⁶ This is the summary which is made by Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, tome VII, article Hypostatique (Union), column 503, to the following text: “The nature is understood either **abstract** – because it doesn't exist by itself – or **common** into all the hypostases of the same species, by uniting them and **it is called nature considered in the species**, or integrally, by adding of the accidents, like they exist into a hypostasis and it is named **nature considered into the individual**; it is the same with the one considered into species. God-the Word embodied, He has not taken any nature which is understood in an abstract way – because this is not an embodiment, but a deception and appearance of embodiment – and neither the one considered into the species – because He has not taken all the hypostases – but He has taken the one considered into individual, which is the same with the one considered into species – because He has taken the first fruits of our leaven”. *The Dogmatic*, Third Book, chapter 11, p. 172.

nature that he has, first of all, something that is his. The hypostasis of the human nature, Who is God-the Word and, for God is equally close to all people and He Has a humanity which is not of one more than of another, Jesus Christ is closer to us than any man.

Thereby, it can be said that Jesus, without being entirely the “natural” man, it is the *central man*, because His humanity is not confiscated by any human individual, but it remains equally close to all, as being the environment which God comes close in, Who has not the egocentric tendency of the human individuals, but He is the care taker of all of them. One cannot use the humanity of Jesus egotistically.

Through the humanity which He has assumed, Jesus has embraced the human kind. His Humanity, more than that of any human individual, it belong to everybody. Of course, the attribute as Son of man, has, among other profound meanings, also this one. Because He has not made Himself the Son of *a* man, Jesus is the Son of the mankind, of the Man by excellence. Through His humanity He activates into the ultimate intensity, the attribute of serving, characteristic to the Son. “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister” (Mathew 20, 28).

Thereby, Jesus Christ represents, more than any human individual, the humanity in its entirety. He raised on the cross not a human individual, but the mankind.

On Golgotha we have the suffering and atoning humanity. There was not a human individual, who to try to boast himself with what he accomplished through the human nature and to try to confiscate, like being his, the results.

Jesus Christ, both by the fact that His humanity was not that one of an individual, but, somewhat, it was of the entire mankind, but also by the fact that it was not produced by human initiative, but by a divine

one – and these two things are in close connection – He is into a special parallel to Adam¹¹⁷.

VI. 3. Virgin Mary – The Mother of God

But, if the Subject Who has formed His human nature within the Virgin Mary, He is the Son of God, She could be called, rightly, as Mother of God.

This is another consequence of the hypostatic union, another aspect of the fact that one and the same divine subject of the Logos has made Himself also subject of the human nature.

The attributes of the Birth Giver and of the Mother of God, they express the report of profound intimacy which has been established between Virgin Mary and the embodied Son of God. If through the word Virgin it is indicated rather the divine initiative into the embodiment of the Son, the words: Birth Giver and Mother of God, they express Her positive role and the report with the One Who has embodied Himself.

According to the real meaning of the communication of the features, the attribute of the Virgin as Birth Giver of God, it doesn't mean to express this dogmatic truth only in the sense that the human nature subject, which has been taken from Her, he is the Son of God. It would be insufficient the idea that Her whole being is was, during the time of forming of the human nature of Jesus, into a direct report only with this nature

¹¹⁷ **S. BULGAKOV** says: "Christ has received the human nature not like any human has it, namely: limited, shortened, particular-personal, in one word, individual or atomic, but He has received it like the first man had it – Adam -, as came out of the hand of the Lord, namely entire; and such a nature, of «body», it has been given Him, by the Most Pure Mother", W. c. p. 231.

and, only because the subject who was leading this process was the Son of God Himself, She can be called Birth Giver of God. The divine hypostasis itself, by becoming also hypostasis of human nature, He was becoming whole through this process, His divine face being penetrated by the human face too. And, whereas the face is the real and the concentrated expression of the nature, through the divine face the divine nature itself was into a real report with Virgin Mary in this interval, by attracting into its contents the elements of the human nature from the being of the Virgin. Without receiving itself the existence from the Virgin Mary, the divinity of the Logos has settled herself through hypostasis, into a receiving report towards Her, without the divinity to change Her in something, of course.

God—the Word, places Himself in a real report as a Son towards Mary, by receiving a part from Her being and a way of His existence. Even if only a part of Him takes its existence from Her, He places Himself entirely, in front of Her, in this relation of a receiver of existence.

One of the merits the Christianity has, it is that it has reestablished the dignity of the woman, by raising her at the height of the man, though their roles into life remain different, according to their natural aptitudes. The reason of this dignity stays into the amazing fact that the Son of God deigned to make Himself the Son of the woman. Through the fact that He comes into world like a man, the woman does not remain on the second plan, because to Her it is given the great plan to be His mother, as long as He dispersed Himself like man, into His act of the embodiment. Toward the woman He placed Himself into the supreme intimacy and tenderness relation. The sole and the highest human authority, towards which God-the Word behaves with tender reverence, it is the maternal authority of a woman. The equilibrium

between man and woman it is so perfectly reestablished, so nobody could ever answer to the question: who it is most precious in the eyes of God, the man or the woman?

Through the act of the birth of God—the Word from woman, the Christianity fully humanizes the sky. That it is humanized also by the fact that on the throne of the supreme existence stays the Son of God, Who made Himself man. But this would continue to leave fear vibrations into the soul of the mortal, because the Man from the helm of the universal destinies He is also God, and the man represents anyway the rigid and the inflexible principles. When the mortal, thereby, knows that Man has a Mother, he gains courage, because the Mother is the quintessence of the loving affection. And this Mother is entirely from amongst us. God voluntarily recognizes the maternal “authority” of the feminine sensitiveness into His report with us. The Son of God gave us Her in order to dare more and to get closer to Him, and the criteria of His humanity to have even more power in His reports with us.

How much humanity does not bring the presence of the Virgin into the Christianity life! The Christianity ceases to be a rigid doctrine, of theories and speculations, by the fact that it introduces a woman and a Mother into the middle, between us and God. The sky humanizes itself, it is no longer distant, scary, and far away from us, because in heavens there is a Mother who stays next to God, having, one one hand, through His benevolence, the authority of a Mother upon Him, when She prays for us, and on the other hand, a motherly tenderness for our hardships.

VI. 4. The Lack of Sin of Our Savior

The human nature taken by the Son of God, it was

wholly ours, "except the sin". The ancestral sin does not belong to the human nature, but it was added later like a curtailment of it. The Man-God neither had a personal sin, not only for He didn't wanted to commit sin, but for He neither was able to make any sin.

Andrutsos (*The Dogmatic*, Romanian translation, p. 200) deduces the lack of sin at Jesus Christ as coming from the hypostatic union, into the sense that the unique subject of Him, being God-the Word and He, handling the human will, might not do any sin.

The assertion of some of the Holy Fathers that the lack of sin at Jesus it is due to His supernatural conceiving, Andrutsos interprets it also in the sense of his thesis, because, as he says, the supernatural conceiving is not but an effect of the hypostatic union. "Because the supernatural birth supposes the hypostatic union, of which effect is, obviously, that the conceiving from the Holy Ghost it does not constitute the main cause of the lack of the sin, but it is only a more special indication of Her."

It would seem, from this sentence, that Andrutsos recognizes the lack of sin at least as a secondary cause of the supernatural conception. But, by continuing the exposure, one can see that he explains it only through the fact that the wanting Self in Jesus is God-the Word.

The lack of sin, though, must be brought into a connection with the supernatural conception, even if this is not but an effect of the hypostatic union.

From the fact that the speaking self in Jesus is God-the Word, one can directly deduce only that He didn't commit personal sins. But the question about how He can receive a human nature deprived of the ancestral sin, it can be answered only by the supernatural conception. Of course, the supra-natural conception it is reduced to the hypostatic union too, to the fact that not through human initiative is formed the individual reality of the human nature of Jesus

Christ, but through the initiative of His preexistent Person. But only through the supernatural conception it can become real the lack of the ancestral sin. The birth with the ancestral sin it is due to the fact that it is the product of the initiative of the man. And in this initiative the man does not manifest like an individual, but like a case. Any birth is a prolongation of the human species and it is attributed to the human species. Therefore, even the individuals who conceive are cleansed of the ancestral sin, like the Christians are, the one who is born, being a prolongation of the human nature, through an own initiative, he is born from sin. The first apparition of the man into existence it is anterior to any own initiative, but not to the initiative of the human nature in general. If it had been able to jump before any human initiative in general, but though it has been able to exist, it would have been brought to existence directly through another initiative than the human one, and it would have not come into world with the inherited sin. Right this happened to Jesus Christ through His conception from the Holy Ghost¹¹⁸.

¹¹⁸ Karl Barth deduces exactly like Andrioutsos, the impossibility of sin in Jesus, from the fact that the Subject was God. "Gewiss, als sein Menschsein wurde es sofort ein anderes als das unsrige, sofern die Sünde, das heißt der Streit des Menschen gegen Gott, in ihm weitergehen konnte. Von dieser einen einzigen Bestimmung abgesehen ist es doch ganz und gar dieses unser bekanntes Menschsein; mit seiner natürlichen Problematik nicht nur, sondern mit der Schuld, die auf ihm liegt und die es zu büßen hat, mit dem Gericht Gottes, das über ihm steht, mit dem Tode dem er verfallen ist. Der Sohn Gottes konnte nicht sündigen – wie könnte Gott sich selbst untreu werden? – aber das alles, den die heilige Schrift eben damit meint, wen sie den Menschen Fleisch nennt, hat der Sohn Gottes auf sich genommen in getragen, indem er Mensch wurde. Und gerade insofern ist er wirklicher, echter, wahrer Mensch, vor Gott stehender Mensch geworden", W. c. P. 45.

But Jesus did not have a rigid nature, foreigner to the human one. According to the Holy Fathers, the passions which burden the human nature are of two kinds: some imputable, sinful, dishonest, and some irreproachable, which are simple punishments for the sin. Jesus did not take the sin but He has organically, existentially, and ontologically impropriated the punishments for the sin.

These punishments are: the need for sleep, the hunger, the thirst, the tiredness, the sadness with the crying, the fear of death, the sensitivity to torments, and the mortality¹¹⁹. The imperishability and the immortality of the body of Jesus Christ were sustained by the Aftartodocets who were condemned by the Church. It is right that the intimate presence of the godlike nature, by enforcing the body, it makes it to raise up from the state of mortality and corruptibility. Therefore, Hesychios from Jerusalem says: if God endured all our things, He did it through a state of retention of godlike power from this influence¹²⁰.

¹¹⁹ S. Bulgakov says that the human nature of Jesus, being without the ancestral sin, though, it was not going in a natural way towards death, because Adam had the possibility to die even before the sin. The Lord was not entirely outside the possibility of death, but of a forced death, not of a natural one. The death becomes inevitable to Jesus only after in Gethsemane He fully assumed the human sin. Not being death in His nature, Jesus can't die except a forced death. W. c. p. 396-7. It seems that this conception of S. Bulgakov doesn't correspond with the one of Saint Maxim the Confessor, because he seems to put also the death with together with the sin into the line of the ones taken by Jesus through the rational assumption, while after the Saint Maxim the death it is assumed together with the nature. Of course into a wider sense also the irreproachable helplessness's of the nature are voluntarily assumed, but together with the nature, aprioristically, not a posteriori.

¹²⁰ W. c. p. 140, John Damascene says: "The body of God but united after hypostasis with the God – Word Himself was not

This retention - we can also say - is not something only negative, but, because the Logos, like unique subject of both natures, through one of them He was persisting in suffering, and through the another He was retaining Himself from the annulling of sufferance influence, we have a voluntarily acceptance of the suffering from the part of the Son of God, namely a manifestation in this form of the divine love, into which are included all the godlike features. The retention of the divine-human subject through His godlike nature from the annulling of the suffering, it is actually a will of His, to suffer, it is an intensification of His love in report with the man. This retention does not mean a separation of the work of the two natures, but into the suffering of Jesus Christ through His body we have again the natures' collaboration, each of them giving what was appropriate to its character.

The human nature of Jesus Christ has gathered both the state anterior to the fall, and the state from after the fall, but it wasn't fully identical to neither of them.

Here are two questions to be asked related to the assuming of these passions:

1. Which is, watched closer, their connection with the sinful passions?
2. Which the meaning of their assuming is?

These questions are so closely interweaved, so that is almost impossible to answer them separately.

Regarding the first question, Hans Urs von Balthasar, commenting the ideas of Maximos the Confessor, he says: "These natural passions, though they belong together with the sin, they enrooted so deeply into the being of the nature than they seem to

separated from the natural mortality, but has became life doer because of the union after hypostases with the Word", w. c. p. 219.

be entered into the nature's constitution"¹²¹. But this is not a satisfying answer. If these passions belong together with the sin, coming after the sin, the fact that they have become almost an integral part of the constitution of our nature, does it take them out from the organic connection with the sin?

Balthazar himself asks: "Is not the passion, even the irreproachable one, so interweaved with the sin, so that it is done from the passion to the sin a continuous passing?"¹²².

Saint Maximos the Confessor said about the irreproachable passion that they "characterize our nature", but the other ones "completely disfigure our nature". Wherever he spoke about them, he considered them like constitutive elements of our nature, and he quit often called them "punishments", while the sinful ones he considered them as "against nature". Saint Maximos the Confessor manifested a remarkable optimism regarding the human nature right after the fall, once he considered these passions, emerged after the sin, like elements which entered the human nature's constitution without altering it. According to Maximos the Confessor, the human nature is good even having these passions, to that we almost don't know about which nature the Saint spoke: about the one after the falling, or about the one from before falling. Saint Maximos the Confessor didn't affirmed a necessary connection of theirs, with the sin.

But the problem is not so simple. We do not meet concretely the human nature but only as hypostasized, in the form of a person. And the irreproachable passions from the human nature, considered abstractly, they are receiving a sinful highlighting into the hypostatic state. Will we attribute, therefore, to the hypostasis, the ingrate role of introducing the sinful

¹²¹ W. c. p. 256.

¹²² W. c. p. 259.

character into the irreproachable passions? The hypostasis is not something else but the accomplished nature, concretely existing by itself, different from the nature which does not concretely exist, so it is simply thought. Whereas the nature's concrete existence is tied in an ordinary way to the condition to be "through itself", this fact indicates the sinful landscape of the irreproachable passions. If there is possible another existence than the one "through itself", it will no longer be necessary the nature's sinful passion to receive a sinful character. In Jesus Christ we have such a concrete existence of the human nature, through somebody else than through Himself, through God-the Word¹²³.

Maximos the Confessor spoke about the nature in itself, like having this irreproachable passions, he concretely looked at Jesus Christ. It is not less true that this way to exist of the human nature in Jesus Christ, without an own hypostasis, had justified Him to speak about our nature regarded in itself, without hypostasis.

Into us, consequently, it is almost impossible not to be manifested a live connection, an internal one, between the two kinds of passions.

The irreproachable passions can remain in this way only at Jesus.

Otherwise, when we are saying that Jesus didn't assume our sinful passions too, we must explain this also through the fact that the irreproachable passions

¹²³ Into the ones born in Jesus Christ, who are orienting themselves with all their concrete existence, according to the God's will, the condition of the existence "by itself" of the nature it is overwhelmed by the living through another, namely through God. Thus, also to Him it can take place an existence without sin, though not absolute also like impossibility, but relative and voluntarily, for they too are living through God, of course not like the man Jesus through the way of being, but through will.

weren't soaked, at Him, with the quality of the sin. And, because this is due to the fact that the human nature of Jesus does not have the own human hypostasis, the thesis that the lack of sin of the Savior it results from the divine subject from within Him, it is put into a new light.

Saint Maximos the Confessor clarified the idea that the sinful landscape is received by the human nature through its accomplishing like an own hypostasis, related to the degrees of the will, through which are leaded all the nature's tendencies. The will, into its ultimate ground, it belongs to the nature. In this first state of it, the will is the general aspiration of the nature to maintains itself into existence, to be, to live, and to move. Thus, the will holds in her hand all the features of the being. As such, the human natural will is not only a natural biological aspiration, but also a spiritual one.

In this first stage, the will has not yet specified any object, but it is only the aspiration of being. In the second stage, the will has fixed itself on an object, no matter the possibility the object to be obtained or not. It is for the time being a fanciful will. We would want to be rich, healthy, immortal, without seriously cogitating whether we can achieve these wishes. The will takes into account the final goal, not the means.

In a new stage, the aspiration toward the goal weighs in on the possibility of to reach it, hence on the means. The aspiration stops, therefore, only at the possible goals, and not at the impossible ones - it doesn't spend any moment cogitating what to eat, bread or stone, but it thinks at what to choose, bread or fruits.

Like a fourth stage there follows the decision or the option or the choosing, between the objects offered by the reflection, like possible and fit to the given case.

To this are comprised, therefore, all the previous phases of the will.

But the option does not automatically comes out of deliberation. For many times, it offers us two objects or directions, equally well justified. If we choose one of them and, maybe, even the least based from them, when the judgment does not present them like being equals, this will be due to our internal disposition. This disposition is called by Saint Maximos as *γνώμη*. This disposition has a subjective character; it is the own opinion, it is the own will, and it is something discretionary.

This own discretionary will, together with the option it caused, like a manifestation of the hypostasis, Saint Maximos the Confessor didn't admit it to Jesus Christ like man. In Him the decision was made by the divine hypostasis, and the own discretionary will of the man it wasn't validated in Him, the human will being totally subordinated to the godlike one.

In the doctrine of Saint Maximos the Confessor, *Γνώμη* carries, in general, the character of sin. Both of them, it and also the option originated from it, they owe their possibility to the doubt which the man is in, because of the fact of not being the man fully clear about which of them is better. Where the truth is set apart from any doubt, they are not possible. Therefore, they cannot exist into Jesus Christ. His human will is only a right movement towards the good put in absolute evidence by the presence of the godhead. The evil would come, according to Saint Maximos the Confessor, out of ignorance. When the truth is obvious, the will is not but the launch into a right line of the wish, of the nature according to what is appropriate to it, and this is the good, for what matches to the being like a creature of God it must be good. What Saint Maximos the Confessor said about the inferior character of choosing between two possible objects, it is confirmed by Luis Lavelle when he argues that the complete freedom, unlike the free will, it is own only

found at the Divinity, at the pure Act, like they call it¹²⁴.

But this disposition, this opinion, which intervenes like a subjective factor on the table established by the judgment, does it not result out of the depths of the nature? Is it right the idea that the will of the foundation of the nature it is good and only into its hypostatic concretizations does the evil appear? Besides this, do the subterranean movements, unobserved immediately, of the passions and lust, not speak rather about a root of them in the very substrate of the nature?

Without directly answering this question, it is good, maybe, to notice that the hypostatic centre of the nature has the decisive role in what concerns the nature's moral state. If the hypostatic centre seriously tries to improve the nature, that cannot remain without any good effects. When into the nature there are moving the lusts and the passions, we will always notice a relaxation into the awareness of the hypostatic watch over. The hypostatic center is the one who can sustain or re-enthroned the purity into the nature. And if the hypostatical center is the one who can do this, it will be also responsible when the nature is invaded by evil. The lusts and the passions are moving into the depths of the nature.

But they were born there through the lack of care of the hypostatic centre. Anyway, where the subject pays

¹²⁴ Notre liberté dispose de certaines puissance qu'elle trouve à l'intérieur de nous, de certains objets qu'elle trouve devant nous. Aussi se manifeste-t-elle toujours comme une option: nous ne la reconnaissons que sous la forme du libre arbitre, de telle sorte qu'au sens strict, la liberté c'est-à-dire la parfait indépendance, serait al marque de l'acte pur, au lieu que la libre arbitre serait marque d'un être particulier engagé dans le monde de la pluralité, qui se trouve toujours en présence de différents partis dont l'un deviendra le sien". "Elle nous oblige à composer toujours avec la nécessité". (W. c. p. 193).

attention to and when he strives towards good, the nature is pure. The fact that of being the purity ruling within nature it depend on the subject. This is the sense which detaches out of the ascesis of the East, which values the watchfulness and the intentional effort so much.

About Jesus Christ, Saint Maximos the Confessor wanted to highlight that the natural purity of His human nature it was maintained through the fact that it had a divine hypostasis.

The sin stays into the inclination of the man toward the direction opposite to the God's will, manifested through γνώμη. It becomes possible through the rounding of the human nature in the own hypostatic entity. And into an ordinary mode, this is the ordinary condition of its concrete existence. When it could concretely exist once, and not rounded in itself, but under the stage managing of the divine hypostatic centre, the possibility towards sin was abolished. The human nature actualizes its movements through its centre, which on that time it was not an autonomous centre, but a divine one.

One could interpret the idea of the Saint Maximos the Confessor otherwise too. He said that the nature, by not wanting except the things appropriate to itself, it implicitly wants the good, because being the nature from God, it can be only good, like what it fits it. If through the concrete option it can be possible to choose also what is inappropriate to the nature, this will be due to the lack of evidence regarding what is appropriated to the being. But from where it comes this vagueness? It can be answered: from the limitation of our nature. So, the nature wants the general good. But in the nature's concrete existence, a hypostatic one, when the nature must define the objects of its will, and also because of the nature's structure, the nature can choose the evil. The optimism of Saint Maximos the

Confessor it would appear to have a pessimistic end.

In any case, also from here it results that the possibility of the sin it begins from on the moment of the hypostatic rounding of the nature, namely on the moment of the concrete existence according to the common law, on the moment which the will - like virtual tension of the nature - it specifies its subject. But the sin is no longer possible in a concrete existence of the nature under the light of the truth, like it exist into the hypostasis of the Logos, or even in people clothed in Christ.

No matter what would the doctrine of Saint Maximos the Confessor be interpreted like, it results that the purity is a good which humanity can have it only when the humanity is overshadowed by the presence of God, but then the human nature necessarily has the purity.

The nature is good by itself, but this is a virtual state and, only through the presence of God, the nature's will does not develop into a γνῶμη, producer of sin, namely into arbitrary. The nature actualizes sinless only by according its will to the will of God. Only then it remains in its natural path. That not the simple fact of the hypostatic existence makes the man sinful, it was shown by Saint Maximos the Confessor in other places, where he spoke about a γνῶμη brought back into the path of the nature and consolidated in good through the reconciliation with God, accomplished by Jesus Christ¹²⁵.

So, only for the concretization of the human nature into hypostasis it has taken an opposite character to the nature, and opposite to God, the sin has been

¹²⁵ "He reconciled us through Himself, with the Father and amongst us, no longer having the opinion opposite to the sense of the nature, but being precisely like through the nature, the same through the opinion, unchangeable". Expositio orationis dominicae, G. P. 90, 880 A - B.

produced. The concretization of the Logos into the hypostasis it was unable to produce the sin. Properly-said, into Jesus Christ has existed a human γνώμη, not like an independent reality, but unified with γνώμη of the unique hypostasis.

We understand now why God-the Man has not taken the sinful passions and how, nevertheless, He had a fully human nature.

But how can He have taken then the punishing passions, the irreproachable ones, which have, though, an internal connection with the sin? In which way their belonging to the human nature can be made obvious, unlike the sin?

We are going to try to answer this question in the followings.

The sin, according to Saint Maximos the Confessor, it does not become a reality into the human nature but through the human nature rounding into a own hypostasis, namely only when it is given this personal activation condition, of natural will specification into a qualified will. And, because of the human nature, in natural way, it does not exist but in this autonomist way, a deviated one, the sin appears into the natural order with an absolute regularity.

Though, not on the human nature was grafted the sin, but on its common form of concrete existence into autonomist hypostasis. Who can accomplish it in a concrete way with the detour of its common hypostatic existence, that man shows the human nature without sin. This was the case of Jesus Christ.

The traits of the irreproachable passions are worn by the human nature even in this form, firstly because they were not totally lacking even in the primordial state, though the sin had the power to accentuate or to actualize them. Adam had the need for food and for rest even from before his falling, though not in the same measure like after the falling. The mortality was

not like a necessity, but like a possibility in his nature, also before Adam's falling. On the other hand, these weaknesses have an eminently passive character, unlike the sin, which though according to its name like passion, it also breaks the man down to the state of passivity, but though it is done with the active participation of the man, being in a close connection with that $\gamma\nu\omega\mu\eta$ of which we have spoken, which is an attribute of the hypostatic state. The sin, being thereby indissolubly tied to the hypostatic autonomous character, it differs from the irreproachable passion which the man does not in any way participate to, by his will, being endured exclusively by his nature. These features of the passion suffering are the weaknesses which are produced into nature like a durable echo, but also like a highlighting of some possibilities from it, after the committing of the sin on the basis of the hypostatic condition of the man. The sinful passion too, it also infiltrates into the nature, like a force which passively carries the nature, but it preserves continuously also an active hypostatic side and it cannot be actualized but through the consent of the last one. The sinful passion is what varies from man to man, and what we can diminish until it nearly disappears. The aspects related to the nature, including the irreproachable passions, they cannot be abolished. They remain, no matter how much the man has bettered himself, like unchanged and general elements of the human nature. Jesus Christ has taken the human nature from after the falling, with its weaknesses being there even before the ancestral sin, but He has not taken it also in its hypostatic autonomous way, which constitutes the condition of the sin.

Into the human hypostasis it cannot be made a strict separation between the punishing passions and the sinful ones. To any of our sinful weaknesses it sticks the sin, due to our hypostatic side. The natural

hunger quickly transforms itself, for example, into a sinful hunger, associating to itself the lust for a certain aliment, like γνῶμη of the hypostatic state. Jesus Christ can suffer the ordeal of the hunger without associating the hunger to the disordered lust - the autonomous one -for some food, but keeping His ordeal under control through His will which has waited for the decision of the divine-human subject.

At Jesus Christ one can see in all the clarity these features of suffering passions, which at us are infected by sin and they can be only gradually purified. "There exists a fear conform to the nature and a fear opposite to the nature", said Saint Maximos the Confessor. About us we could say that the natural fear we do not have it anymore but in the form of the fear opposite to the nature. At Jesus it does not exist but the first one. The fear according to the nature it is the defensive movement of the being through contraction or retreat. The fear opposite to the nature is the same movement without the right judgment and with the loss of self-control.

Although integrally passive, this fear consistent with the nature or just because of that, it is more fully held in the harness of the will, not the one of a gnostic will, but the one of a general will of the human nature, subordinated to the decision of the unique hypostasis from Jesus Christ.

Thereby, in Jesus Christ it is accomplished a wonderful synthesis between these two so much contrary things in our experience: the fear of death and the will to harness it and which submissively waits for the decision of the Logos, receiving this power just from the hypostatic union with Him. Therefore, Saint Maximos the Confessor could say that at Jesus "the natural things did not anticipate the will". Though His passions are not passed through His hypostatically specified will, but they have only the general character

of some passions of the nature, they are more fully mastered by will, both because the nature itself is also will and it moves only through what is truly fit to itself, namely towards good, but also because the decisions, into Jesus Christ, they are of the divine hypostasis who has other power harness all the movements of the human nature which He has assumed.

On us, any passion which starts from our nature and which, according to its meaning, it is irreproachable, it kidnaps us and it makes us sinful. Firstly, because the hypostatically specified will it is not a more accentuated degree of will, but one specified in an autonomist-sinful sense. The second one, because in our nature is mixed also the sin and it infiltrates itself through any suffering but not-sinful feature, according to its sense. We are servants of the sin through any lustily feature, and we are chained, "thrown", into a sinful existence, because even the hypostatic free will through which we should aid ourselves, it is sinful too. In our case the "passion" is "passion" in the full etymological meaning of the word, because we cannot master it through our will. At Jesus the sinful passion does not exist, and the irreproachable passion is dominated by His will, firstly, right because the sin is not in Him, to give power to the passion and, secondly, because His hypostatically specified will is the will of the divine Logos. Jesus is not definitively downed by the force of the hunger or of by the fear of death, giving up like a consequence of the temptation to remove them by any means. No matter how much the passion tormented Him, He remained with His will, not downed.

From this one it is also clarified the sense of the temptations which the Savior was subjected to. They were not only a frame-up for our eyes, but they expressed the real suffering of the Lord under the pressure of these weaknesses and the straining of His will, not to let Himself overwhelmed by that suffering.

It is said that Jesus was unable to sin. This does not exclude the straining of His will, but it implies it. He cannot sin, because He had a will capable to dominate the suffering and because His will cannot admit to be overwhelmed by suffering. Specifically, in His experience, Jesus lived a straining of the will in order to dominate the suffering. The incapacity to sin must not be associated, in our imagination, to an inertia of the nature, but to a spiritual feature of it. He was unable to sin, not because through His humanity Jesus was inert, but because He represented the supreme peak of a spiritualization and of a straining of will subordinated to God.

But the sufferings coming from the weaknesses which He was subjected to, sometime it rose to a degree in which surpassed any human suffering, precisely because He accepted the temptations, and He didn't tried to bypass them. His sufferings were in a direct proportional report with His voluntary straining, of not searching to get rid of them through sin. Jesus was, in these culminating moments of the sufferings, into a situation analogue to the man who, after he assumed a great mission and faced huge endeavors to fulfill it, he walk ahead, suffering, but not allowing, even for a moment, the temptation and the regret to sneak into his soul.

It has been asked the question: could be Jesus an example to us, if He was unable to sin? We have to fight with the sin in sufferings and we can easy slip from suffering into sin. But the matter is put in this way: Jesus can be an example to us not because we can sin, and He was unable to, but because we can, also, not to sin. Our capacity to not sin and His impossibility to sin are internally experienced into the same straining of the will. We must fight the sufferings, being mastered by the thought that there exists for us the possibility not to fall into temptation and, if we will

fall, we are guilty. If we fight in this way, we won't fall. And Jesus fights with the sufferings not with the carelessness of the one who knows that He cannot be touched by temptation, but with the conscience that this immunity He owes precisely to His tension of will, it even coincides to it: He cannot fall into temptation for His will is unable not to fight strained, but victoriously, the suffering. Besides this, Jesus is an example not to the people who fight only through their own power, but to the ones who receive the godlike help. The divine grace of the Holy Ghost gives them a power beyond their human powers, like Jesus had too a power beyond the human powers¹²⁶.

Especially heavy was the fight of the Savior against the fear of death in the Gethsemane garden. The fear of death belongs, in a natural way, to our body. Into this one, nothing is sinful. But if, in the same time, the fear of death hadn't been kept under control by His will, that feat would have become an occasion for falling into temptation, of struggle in order to avoid death by all means. In Gethsemane, the human will of Jesus it gained the full victory over the fear of death, without becoming impassive to the torment of this thought. Until that night, the fear of death and His will they didn't seriously clashed, but that it was being manifested vaguely and generally, without being caught with both arms, by will, and dominated. In Gethsemane, under the immediate threat of death, the fear broke out with a supreme intensity, but also with the will which must face the fear with the same power. Thereby, in that night, Jesus was married in spirit with

¹²⁶ Not to mention the example which Jesus gives us through the fact that He accepted the most amazing descent from the heavenly glory, to the dust of our created existence, absolute voluntarily, which we can not to do, not even nearly, because any our descent it is made from a very relative height and, in general, the human sufferings and the death we do not receive them voluntarily, but they are our necessary destiny.

the death: He has accepted the death with His will.

This victory of the will over the fear of death, of the human nature, it meant the supreme spiritualization of the nature, the transfiguration and the liberation from its inertia and helplessness. The fear of death, without meaning a state of contradiction towards God, is yet one of contrast, with a different meaning¹²⁷. For the full tuning of the human nature's will, with the will of God, it must take place inside it, this victory of the will over the fear of death, especially because to Jesus the death on the Cross it was a mission.

Jesus had to assume a human nature, impoverished by the capacity of the irreproachable passions, for, in the victory over them, to harden that human nature, and to spiritualize it from inside out.

But, through these victoriously borne passions, He overcame over the sin. The sin is relieved in each man by these sufferings. They are the matter which the sin lights up in. They are the door the sin enters through. In Jesus Christ the sin cannot penetrate through their mediation. His human nature can stay against, until the finish of the sin's assault. His passions, instead of being the fords which the sin to enter through, they were the fire zones which kept any sin at distance, by burning it in face and making it to kneel in front of His human nature¹²⁸.

¹²⁷ Saint Maximos the Confessor, w. c. , G. P. 91, 212 C. D. S. Bulgakov says: "Christ was tempted by real. In other words, He experienced, really, the hardship of His path, which He sensed it. This hardship it was, first of all, natural. An uninterrupted victory over the disobedient and helplessness body... He has taken into His human nature the non-enlightenment and the autonomous state of this world, which had been, through the free victory, brought to the worship of God", w. c. p. 327.

¹²⁸ "The Lord undressed the Chiefs and the Dominions at the first experience of the temptations into the wilderness, healing, to the entire nature, the passion of pleasure. He undressed them also

For the first time, the sin was proven weak towards the human nature. The moment of temptation coincided to the moments in which the suffering element produced the culminating sufferings into the human nature of Jesus, offering the sin the maximum possibility to penetrate His being. If in those moments the sin cannot not penetrate His human nature, it won't ever do it. Into the temptation of the Lord, His human nature won a real victory over the sin, making it, for the first time, helpless. The unseen chiefs of the evil, they tried to slip into Him the temptation of avoiding the sufferings, being deceived by the presence of the suffering element in Him. The Lord sensed these chiefs who were stalking Him. But the temptation didn't penetrate Him neither for an instant. And, the fact itself that the Savior was for several times on the edge from which every man falls into the abyss of the sin, and He didn't fall servant to the temptation, it means a victory of the human nature and a weakening of the sin in report with the human nature.

Thereby is illuminated the reason of the assumption, by Christ, of the irreproachable passions of the human nature. By assuming them and by bearing them, the Savior gave back to our nature's

during death, uprooting, also, from our nature, the passion of pain... By taking, without sin, the suffering character of the nature, through which was working all the mean and damaging power, He undressed during, His death, the Chiefs and the Dominions which came against Him, for probation, triumphing and exposing them on cross in the time of His soul exit, like ones which have not found anything into the suffering element of the nature. While they expected to find something human in Him due to the suffering features of His body, through His power, He liberated through His holy body, which He received from us, all the human nature, from the sin mixed with the suffering element, subjecting just through the suffering element of the nature, the cunning dynasty which was sleeping just into that element". Quaest. ad Thalass., G. P. 90, 316 C. D.

will, the supremacy over them with the help of God, and He melted down, at their flame, the force of the sin. If the human nature hadn't passed through the suffering produced by the suffering element, it wouldn't have had the occasion to achieve an undeniable victory over the sin. It is easy not to sin until the supreme sufferance do not urges you to avoid the sufferance. But the sin remains possible in case of a suffering which you do not passed through. The human nature of Jesus placed itself in the most precarious situations, and in the most favorable situations to the victory of the sin. But He won, even in these situations. Into His sufferance, God burnt down the sin of our nature "like the fire burns the wax or like the sun the moisture of the earth"¹²⁹.

This victory really reached the sin of the human nature, not just because He did not let His nature to kneel under the sin and He raised in it the will above the suffering, but also because Jesus identified Himself, in a certain sense, to the sin of all people.

We have shown before, that beside the irreproachable suffering element which He assumed existentially, Jesus has taken over Him also the passions of the dishonesty, namely the sin, but through relation, like we make ourselves partakers to the deeds and sufferings of others, but without ourselves doing or upholding them. Like the mother suffers by the shame and by the pain of the real deeds of her son (maybe even more than him), like she would have done those deeds, by substituting him in a certain way, in the same way, Jesus has substituted Himself to all people, in their sinful quality, and His suffering has not been only because of the irreproachable human weaknesses which He has taken, but also because of the pain that He has sensed

¹²⁹ Maximos the Confessor, G. P. 90, 316 B; 91, 1044 A.

for the sins of everybody. Thereby, He has assumed the suffering element of our nature not just in order to resist the most precarious situation of the temptation, by defeating the sin, but also to have an instrument through which to suffer all the shame and pain for the human sin, assumed in a relation–communion way, by Him. Like the head suffers because of the pain of the body and the loving and merciful doctor because of the pains of his patient, also in this regard He melted them like the fire melts the wax¹³⁰.

He represented us in the fight against the sin through suffering, not only because He won through His individual nature, and this victory He communicates to us too, but also because He has substituted all of us through love, through solidarity. The whole sin of the mankind, the whole guilty mankind, He gathered them in His suffering for them. He established an internal, living connection, with the whole humankind and in His acts and sufferings there was not only Him, but chained to Him, there was the whole mankind. The fight from Gethsemane against the fear of death, and the victory over it, they were the fight and the victory of the entire mankind. No person has ever represented on a stage, in such a real manner, the entire the mankind, like Jesus in Gethsemane.

On that universal scene, on which each of us was somehow present through the will of Jesus Christ, it was decided in good the fate of all the ones who would draw positive consequences for them, and all of them has gained the supremacy over the sin and over the death.

Out of all these detailed analyzes it results that the general reason of the irreproachable sufferings traits which were assumed by Jesus, it is that of a bridge between Him and people. We have said before, that the

¹³⁰ Maximos the Confessor, *Op. Theol. Et. Pol.*, G. P. 91, 237.

divine person of the Logos means, in the first place, eminent intentionality towards communion. This is shown also by the fact of the assuming of some sufferings which are not at all for Him but for the others too. Like the human activity and the human word too, the human irreproachable suffering of Jesus it was an anchor which He has thrown from Himself into His fellow humans' being. The Son of God has come close to the people in all respects. He hasn't come only in an appearance of an approach, but in a real way, internally, by throwing from Himself to the people, all the uniting savior bridges. Through all of these, God comes closer to us, not to fulfill Himself, but to make Himself accessible and savior to us, and to show His love in noticeable shapes.

The suffering is discovered on this way, grace to Christianity, in what it can actually be, in its ennobled shape, like a dynamic centre of the unification of the humanity, of gathering the mankind from the demonic scattering, into the Kingdom of the heavenly Father.

VI. 5. The Theosis of the Human Nature

The kenosis of the godlike nature, like we suggested it, with the noticing of the divine un-changeability, like a weaving of its existence and activity with the human nature, it has like a reverse the Theosis of the human nature. We have seen that the basis of the kenosis, the reason which makes possible and explainable the manifestation of the godlike nature through the human nature, without changing itself, that is the love. Also the love is the base and the deifying power of the human nature. Like into the divine love manifestation through the human features and possibilities it is present and active the godhead himself, who has descended without to descend himself and without to

change himself, in the same way a human nature, which has become vehicle and center of the divine love, it is deified, without ceasing to be a human nature. Thereby, what is humbleness, like a necessary shape of the manifestation of love, for the thickened sight of the people, it is in reality ascent and deification.

The deification does not consist of a physic dilatation, a substantial one, of the human nature, but it consists of spiritual purification and intensification. This is the direction which the anthropology and the mystic-ascetic pedagogy of the Holy Fathers lead all of us towards. Their ideal is the purification of passions like expressions of the egotism, in order to make possible the dwelling of the love for God and for people. In both respects the progress take place at once, and not only through the man but also through God. Only the encouragement which God gives us through His divine grace and His love, it helps us to grow up into the rejection of the egotistic passions and into love.

The Theosis, by and large, it means a wakening up and an amplifying of the spiritual powers which stay numbed in our nature because of the sin, under the seal of an evil witchcraft. We cannot know which degree the forces of the human nature can grow up to. The huge intellectual variations and the spiritual variation from man to man, they show us that the human nature isn't petrified in rigid limits, but it has a great elasticity. We cannot know how far can be raised up the human nature's upper limit. On the other hand, this growth is not only a development from inside out, but it also is an adding of power, from outside, namely from God. Properly-said, the powers of the actualized nature and the divine grace which comes from there, they do not stay beside to one another like two separate entities, but they are synthesized into a single big spiritual force. The divine grace is rather the waking up and the amplifier of the

nature's powers. We have here a case analogue to that one which we notice when our powers are growing up when a fellow human creature is regarding us with love and with trust. We do not know what is from us and what is from him. But both of them are necessary¹³¹.

¹³¹ The analogy between the growth of the power of the man, through the love which connects him with another man, and between the deification, it is very okay, since the last one is due to our report of love with God. That's why, a lot of the traits of love can serve us like steps for the raising up to the understanding of the godlike gifts. Ludwig Binswanger finds that the man who exists like love he feels his existence like having its reason into a gift and being surrounded by gift, by divine grace, unlike the Heidegger's worry-man, who feels himself guarded by void at the both ends of his existence. The question regarding: what the man feels himself gifted with, in the state of love, Binswanger answered it: with the fullness of the existence (*Daseinsfülle*), which is an increase of the love through itself, into *me-you* relation (*Grundformen und Erkenntnis menschlichen Daseins*, Zürich, 1942, p. 154). "This fullness we consider it like an overflowing of the being (*Überschwang des Daseins*). In opposition to the swelling and to the overflow of the evil of life (of the vital energy), the overflowing of the being in love, it must be understood like a supra-spatialization (*Überräumichung*) and making eternal of it (supra-historicity) [*Verewigung (Übergeschichtlichkeit)*]" While to the Heidegger's careful-man any launch toward the future moment it implies an enrichment, but, in the same time it also implies a renouncement to other possibilities, and thereby a plus and a minus, the man, like love, he is continuously into a pure growth, he grows up with all the possibilities, with all his virtualities. (Diese Transzendenz zeigt mehr den Doppelcharakter des Gründens der Sorge, nämlich «überschwingend-entziehend zumal» zu sein, sondern sie ist **rein** überschwingend... Infolgedessen werden dem Dasein als Liebe durch den Entwurf «keine bestimmten anderen Möglichkeiten» entzogen". C. Op. P. 155). In this way we can understand more easily what it means putting into value all the man's possibilities, through the deifying love. But, despite

Also the report amongst people, showing us that the lack of love of somebody for us, and our lack of love for somebody, both of them weak our strengths, and it helps us to better understand how the lack of the divine grace like love of God towards us, and the egotism's sin, they keep our nature asleep like under a bad witchcraft or detoured from its normal path, animalized, precisely like in the fairy tells.

In this way, this state of a great spiritual development of the human nature, by not being but interpenetration with the divine grace, it rightly can be called deification.

The love, of which subject has become the deified one, it is godlike. The man reaches thereby the source of an endless godlike love, namely another God, not by itself but through divine grace and through communion with God; not through an autonomous being, but through uninterrupted participation to the source of godhead. From him irradiates the light like from another sun, but only because he reflects or conveys, like an environment, the light of the unique central Sun of the existence. On the other hand, the man mustn't be confounded to God; the characters of his nature are not lost, because it doesn't irradiates the divine powers from itself, but it only conveys, through its forms and organs, the divine power which has its ultimate source into the divine nature.

the whole abundance state, of the constantly increasing overflowing, produced by love, the nature does not come off from its finite characters, though it lives into infinity and it conveys the infinity, says Binswanger, making us to understand what it is possible like, the same thing, in the case of the deification: ("Sichüberschwingend «fliegt» das Dasein nicht hinaus... Aber im Gegensatz zum entziehenden Überstieg der Sorge bildet sich der reine Überschwingung der Liebe das endliche Sein als unendliches ein", p. 156).

Whether the nature of any man can reach astonishing heights through deification, like it is shown in the examples of Saints, the human nature of Jesus Christ has reached, through the deification which He has imparted Himself with - the human nature being worn by the divine hypostasis -, the last possible height of amplifying its powers, which we cannot even imagine it where it is. Because the subject in Him is the godlike Word and, because His godlike nature and work are inseparably clasped with the human nature and its work, through all the thoughts, features, and directions of work of the human nature, there it was manifesting the consummate purity and the divine love. The human nature was not annulled, but it was giving the shape, the channel, and its effort, into purification and love. But the divine nature was giving through the common subject its help and work, which was prolonging and increasing until beyond any limit, the results of the efforts of purification and the power of love manifested through the human nature¹³².

¹³² Saint John Damascene exposes on this way the deification of the body, which doesn't change the natural features: "The body of God, however, it has been enriched with the godlike activities due to the most pristine union with the Word, namely after hypostasis, without its natural features to suffer any loss. For It doesn't work the godlike things in the virtue of its energy, but in the virtue of the Word united with it, the Word showing His own energy through it. The red hot iron burns, not because of possessing the energy for burning in the virtues of a natural principle, but for it possesses this energy because of the union with the fire". W. c. , Book III, Chapter XVII, p. 208. (The quote fits also the ones that were told at the "communication of the features"). But, because the human nature, when the godlike energies are manifesting through it, it doesn't cease to be active, it can be said, in a certain way, that the bearer subject feels the energies of both natures, the divine energies prolonging the human energies. The organs and the energies of the human nature are becoming more and more

Determined like so, the sense of the deification, the churchly dogma about the deification of the human nature of God since His life time on earth, it becomes easier to understand. Likewise, it is clarified the thought that also into heaven, with all the godhead brought to maximum, the human nature will have kept its characteristics and, so, we do not need theories like that one of Luther about the ubiquity of the body of God after ascension into heaven, which exceeds the frames of the dogma from Chalcedon about the not-

able for the role of a channel and of an opportunity of manifestation of the divine energies, proportionally to their consummation. Saint Maximos the Confessor could speak therefore about a limitless possibility of the human nature to irradiate the divine energies. It is true that he affirmed that the human nature is passive into the deification state and this passivity is characteristic to the future life, unlike the activity from this life. But the passivity won't have a meaning of inertia if it is possible an endless progress of the human nature in this state, in order to be the environment for increasingly richer irradiation of the divine energies: "How long we are here, we are active until we reach the end of the centuries, when our power and work for activating, they will come to an end. But, into the following centuries, by enduring that transformation towards the deification by grace, we won't activate, but we will be passive. And for this reason we will never reach the end of the deification. Because this will be a supra-natural suffering, not being there any word to define that endless deification of the ones who will endure it". G. P. 90, 320 D.. The deification is a continuous increasing of love from the love itself, increasing together the showing of the divine love and the capacity to receive it, so the man's capacity to love too. If the endless progress of the man will constitute an ever increased capacity of the human nature to be the channel of the divine energies, maybe the supreme deification of the humanity of Jesus Christ it means a perfect capacity of it to convey all the infinity of the divine powers. But this, only after ascension.

changeability of the natures. All the attempts to imagine and understand the godhead are too loaded with the complexity of the following concepts: space, substance, and direct physical power. The deification would have to be, after these fantasies, a spatial-energetic dilatation towards infinite, which would lead to a breaking of the limits, to an annulment of the human nature.

But, it is essential to man to be a subject of intentionality, sustained by a limited spiritual effort. When to the effects of the own effort we feel that there are added much bigger effects due to another centre and subject of spiritual power, our nature hasn't been annulled, for we realize continuously what it gives us. The godlike Word from after the embodiment, both in the time until He lived with His human nature on earth, and also after that, forever and ever, He remains aware of the limit of the efforts made through His human nature. But, because to the human work it is associated the godlike work, He is the bearer of unlimited powers.

Although there is a difference between the deification of His human nature, while He was wearing it on earth, and the deification from the resurrection, especially, since the ascension. The Holy Scripture perseveres in speaking about a special glory which Jesus has entered after the ascension. Of course, this consists also in a falling off of the fish scales from over the human eyes, which saw after the resurrection and after the ascension, in the humbleness of Jesus Christ shown in embodiment and sacrifice, the depth of the godlike love; they have seen that the human image that Jesus Christ has taken, it is not but the manifestation of the unimaginable love of the Son of God and, by seeing this, the people connected themselves, with their souls, to Him, in a special way, like to the closest one to them.

But the resurrection and the ascension do not mean only a modification of the human subjectivity, but also an objective amplification of the humanity of Jesus Christ, without exiting from its general characters. While Jesus was with the human nature on the earth, His body was subjected to the irreproachable weaknesses and sufferings of the usually body. All of these impacted the soul like a sufferance. He suffered obsessions, hunger, and thirst, and pains due the nails which He was crucified with. After resurrection and ascent His body has become spiritualized, by not being subjected anymore to the conditions of the material existence on earth. The spiritual part of the human nature, and with it also the godhead, they no longer have in front of them the opacity of the matter, but they were flooding in plain sight and they were manifesting themselves unimpeded. In this consists the aspect of brightness of the deified body. The Son of God could spiritualize His body and show it shiny even before His death. But He retained Himself through His godlike nature to get His body out from the general earthly law of the human trials and sufferings. He wants to follow the natural way of the human body, which only after death it exits the material conditions of the historical existence. There was almightiness into Jesus Christ also while He was on earth, and it was manifesting into the sustaining of the Universe and sometimes in wonderful deeds. But the almightiness it is in the hand of God's will and it is used on a purpose, where and when He wants. It is not an elementary natural power which overflows everywhere without any order. By being a man amongst people, the almightiness of Christ was manifesting like love and through love, the only form which He can do them the maximum good in, by elevating them to the rank of God loving subjects and of fellow beings.

The imperishability, the brightness from after resurrection, they put a distance between Jesus and

the people, though neither this is, related to them, a physical brightness, a constraining one, but a spiritual brightness, a warm one; it is the love not shadowed by the obstacle of the body; it is the love of the being which has raised above the human miseries. But just because it is no longer filtered through these human obstacles common to all people, and just because it is ascertained more obvious as being the love of God and not the love of a simple man, it creates a distance even now. For it is obvious love brings together, but because it obviously is the love of God, it imposes respect and even fear. So the love and the fear come antonymously together, by giving a kind of saint shyness, of a saint timid desire, like it is said in the Saint Liturgy: "With the fear of God, with faith, and with love, you come closer". The courage of approaching is helped by the fact that the brightness of the Resurrected One, by consisting in the love manifested without the obstacles of the human body, it is though the brightness of a human face; when the apostles saw Christ after resurrection, they knew that it is just the face of the one who suffered like they were, for all the human things. If the Son of God hadn't had a body totally like ours, the people wouldn't have had the courage to come close to His appearance into a shining body.

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It was said that "in poetry like in religion, it is valuable only the word that has become flesh, and only the flesh that has become word"¹³³. This truth has found its supreme fulfillment, from both sides, into the kenosis of the godlike nature and in the deification of

¹³³ **FR. GUNDOLF**, *Dichter und Helden*, at Grigorie Popa, *Spiritual itinerary*, Sibiu, 1943, p. 91.

the human nature into Jesus Christ. The godlike Word has descended to the human one, but through this the human nature has been attracted to welcome Him, until it has become a godhead revealing word.

They two kenoses have met into a point which they can do a commune work at. The humanity of Jesus Christ has been raised on the supreme level of spiritualization, due to the descent of God into it. "The embodiment of God makes the man God, as much as God has made Himself man", says Maximos the Confessor.

THE SECOND PART

THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

MANUSCRIPT

VII. The Threefold Dignity of the Savior

VII. 1. The Report between the Person and The Work of Jesus

Starting with this chapter we are going to occupy ourselves with the work accomplished by Jesus Christ for our salvation. Until now we have been treating about His person.

The Christianity gives the person of Jesus Christ an overwhelming importance in the frame of its dogmatics, like no other religion gives to its founder. The Christian dogma is not a system of ideas, or whatever doctrine assembled by the mind of a man, but, into its centre, there reigns the living person of Jesus Christ. That's why, the Christian dogmatics is all that can be more alive. In front of any philosophical system the dogma is incomparably more alive.

Any philosophical system comprises a series of reflections, more or less arid, deprived of the life giving power of the personal relationship. What can offer us a system of ideas which leaves the man by his own, for his salvation? Absolutely nothing! That system does not bring any help from outside man, to the man's own self, in order to potentiate his powers, and to encourage the efforts he makes for his own salvation and, especially, in order to give him a surety about the salvation's possibility. The system of ideas doesn't place the man in connection with an exterior reality, like the Christianity does. The most categorical external reality and the only one capable of giving me a help by itself, not through what I am capable to bring out, only through my own powers, from it, thereby, which is capable to give me something more than I can give it myself, it is the reality of a person different from

my own self. And if this different person whom I am placed in an intimate contact with, He is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, like a Christian I find myself in contact with the supreme reality and with the supreme help.

The Christian has the experience that Jesus Christ is all that can be more real, more alive and more able to help him. He knows that without to stay into a permanent connection with Jesus Christ he could by no means to be saved.

Jesus Christ did not come, in fact, into world, only to offer us some method which we search alone our salvation through. He stays forever and ever with us, like the unique source out of which it comes our salvation. The salvation means relationship, intimate communion with Jesus Christ, not an individualistic conformation to a certain doctrine. The salvation is not a gnosis or an ethics. It is not accomplished by knowing or by doing something, but by living with Jesus Christ. Out of this living with Christ, there result both: to know and to do. This is because Jesus Christ is not a simple man, like other founders of diverse religions, but He is God Himself, who has come in the maximum closeness to us, with His love.

If the man cannot fulfill either even more modest purposes, only through his human powers, it is even surer that the salvation cannot be obtained by the man except from God.

Jesus is Savior through His own Person. No man can find the salvation somewhere outside of Christ's Person, where Christ would have placed it, like a standing alone aid, after He has created it. Searching for salvation means searching for Jesus Christ, for the communion with Him. The state of salvation is the state of communion with Jesus Christ like God and, through Him, or due to Him, with the fellow humans. We have the salvation only if the Man Jesus unveils

Himself to us like God Who has become to us that supreme but though close to us: “You”; that “You” full of authority, but though full of love that wakes up our subject from the death of the selfish loneliness and put us in a not-annullable connection with Himself, and through Himself with the fellow humans.

But then, which the role of Jesus Christ’s work is, since we accentuate so much the importance of His person?

Answering this question, we must say that the work of Jesus Christ it is inseparable from His person. The work is, by and large, an external manifestation of a person. Through the work of somebody, we enter the connection with his person. The spoken word of somebody, by being a work of his, it is a manifestation of his person, a bridge which he gives us to call us into relationship, into communion with him. Through word we are always passing to the person who has spoken it. Only then it can the word be considered like something which sends us away from the person, when we consider the word like a standing alone idea.

In fact, when a man talks to you, your attention concentrates on him, his imagine dominates you and imposes to your spirit. You do not fell his words like something putting a distance between him and you, but, rather the opposite, like something which opens up the one whom you are talking to and it brings him closer to you, and also like something which also opens you up and it brings you closer to him. The word makes the connection between him and you and gets you closer to one another.

This truth is especially valid regarding Jesus Christ.

Any human person actualizes among people an intentionality for communion. But the human person actualizes it in a disfigured and hindered manner, because of his own spiritual and material egotism. God, like man, He has accomplished in the most unobstructed, and undisturbed human person, the

intentionality for communion into the human circle, even more so because into the divine plan the Son manifests the spirit of serving, of obligation, into the divine communion too. Therefore, the embodiment itself of the Son of God it constitutes His coming close to people, being a savior deed. His theandric Person is Himself savior reality.

Thereby, the work of Jesus Christ it cannot be separated from His Person, because of not being but the necessary manifestation of His personal structure itself. Being fully a human person, Jesus Christ cannot be but the most undisturbed actualization of the tendency towards communion. And a fully human person He could not be except for He is in the same time the created reverse of the uncreated divine person. In Jesus Christ the spirit of communion is not maintained by a center from outside, but it has the last residence in Himself. He does not need to beg for love, which to show it to the people, from God like from a foreign somebody, but He has the love in Himself, in a not diminished manner.

Thereby, the Person of Jesus Christ is not-separated from His work, by the manifestation of His love. Only through an abstraction it is possible to speak separately about His Person. In a natural way His Person manifests in savior deeds, and the savior deeds are not-separated from His person.

Of course, this thing seems somehow self-understood when it is treated like work, in the sense of a present action. Then, to any man there exists an inseparability between his person and his work. We understand how, on the moment when Jesus was speaking a word of teaching, this word was forming a whole with His Person and what was giving life to the listeners it was not the word taken by itself, but it was the hanging, of their being, on the Savior. The words and the deeds of a person, on the moment they are

spoken and done, they cannot be separated from the person, because they are the person's himself manifestation, and they reveal and convey the person, in an existential way, to the persons whom he can attract into the unitary circle of the dialog. But how it can continue to be valid this fact to the words which once flew from the lips of the Savior and they have been fixed into a book, or to the deeds once done and which remained into the memory of the people?

This inseparability is maintained in the case of Jesus Christ, for He is God, and God is alive. This means, on one hand, that any man in whom it has been born the mystery state of the faith, he cannot escape - when reading the words of Jesus from the Gospel, or when remembering His deeds and sufferings - the dominating impression, the certitude that Christ, by continuing to exist, He is present in an unseen way, like Subject of those words and deeds. It hasn't been seen yet a believer truly reading the Bible, who hasn't been dominated by the surety that there is not only him with a book during those moments, but, slowly, the words started seeming like being no longer fixed by the book, but they were spoken by Jesus Christ Who placed Himself instead of the book. Even less, the believer can think at a deed of Jesus, while making abstraction of His person. When he thinks at the crucifixion of Jesus he sees Him crucified. And not like one who was, how we are thinking at the other people who have done some deeds, but like as we are thinking at the One Who exists right now and Who wears the traces of the crucifixion. With the thought of the believer in God, it is connected, in an overwhelming way, the feeling, and the certainty of Christ's presence. One can think at any other disappeared person like at a simple memory, without being dominated by the sentiment of that one's presence. But the believer cannot think at Jesus Christ without having this feeling. The ontological argument

of Anselm of Canterbury was built on the logical belonging of the existence of God to the idea of God like the most perfect being. But to the believer it is of incontestable existential evidence that he cannot think at God without being dominated by the certitude of His presence, so, at any word or any deed of Him, without “seeing” Him like subject, belonging to the present, not only to the past.

On the other hand, the expression “alive is God” it has in this connection of ideas another meaning too. Any man, while he is living, he shivers when he hears God’s words repeated or His deeds mentioned, even when God’s name is not mentioned. These words and deeds are Himself, into a past moment of His existence. They are not only outside Him, but also into Him, as stratified in His existence. He is attracted where are repeated His words and where are mentioned His deeds. He is nigh to the one who repeats His words and who mentions His deeds, at least with an intentional presence, immediately that He acknowledges that. And this happens, especially when He would find His name mentioned in connection with His words and deeds. Jesus Christ, by being also God Who continues to exist and to know all the things done everywhere, acknowledging the repeating of His words and the mentioning of His deeds and of His name, He is present, into a more than intentional manner, next to the one who reads or listens with faith the words spoken or the deeds done by Him. Thereby, the believer, by reading the words or by listening to the deeds of the Savior, he sees Him actual, like their subject, and He, when sees His words repeated and His deeds being mentioned, somehow Himself is the One repeating the sayings and the doings of them, through His identification to them, through the

recognition of them like being His¹³⁴.

¹³⁴ More recently, the philosopher Martin Heidegger has highlighted that the past and the future they are not two realities detached from present. If the past had had something existent by itself, like an ordinary object, the memory would have been inexplicable. The memory which the past is constituted through, it is a stretching backwards of our being. We have the past through something actual from us, through an “expansion” of our being behind us. The future, also, it is lived in present, as an expansion, as our “epektasis” forwards. The future, by itself, it could not exist. The past, the present and the future are not three pieces of a thread, from which one remained behind, and another one still hasn’t reached in front of us. At the basis of our being, or even our being himself, it is a temporality (Zeitlichkeit) like a threefold ecstatic tension forwards, backwards, and towards the one from the front. The temporality is another expression of the worry, which constitutes the essence of the human being. But, because the worry is by excellence the tension towards future, the extension of the future has a primacy into the temporality actualization. (“Das sein des Daseins bestimmen wir als Sorge. Deren ontologischer Sinn ist die Zeitlichkeit... Zeitlichkeit ist das ursprüngliche «außer-sich» an und für sich selbst... Die Einheit der horizontaler Schemata von Zukunft, Gemessenheit und Gegenwart gründet in der ekstatischen Einheit der Zeitlichkeit“. Sein und Zeit, p. 329, 364, 365. „Das primäre Phänomen der Ursprünglichkeit und eigentlichen Zeitlichkeit ist die Zukunft“, p. 329. But the tension towards future, when refers to our own most intimate possibility, the death, it makes us to turn at our intimacy, which we regarded before like something given, like something which comes from beforehand. By coming back to ourselves, we then realize us like formers ones. The past is a presence. In the extension which we are living the past and present and the future in, and, by and large, in each of the three ones are comprised also the other two ones. The temporality is a unity wholly lived into each of the three extensions of it, each time. In the tension towards the future, the human being lives the takeover of her existence, by transmitting to himself through himself his possibilities received from past. [Nur Seines, das wesenhaft in

The deed, especially, it is - like the word also - a manifestation of the intentions of a person, an opening, an overflowing of someone's love upon us, a bridge which a person stretches to us for communion, a prolongation of that person¹³⁵.

When speaking about the work of somebody we cannot remove the accent from on his person, because the person himself manifest, illuminates, and enters our region through his deeds and words.

In an especially way, the work of Jesus Christ, both in thought and in doing, it is a work with a mystical

Sein **zukünftig** ist, so dass es frei für seinen Tod an ihm zerschellend auf sein faktisches Da sich zurückwerfen lassen kann, d. H. Nur Seines, das als zukünftiges gleichursprünglich **gewesen** ist, kann sich selbst die ererbte Möglichkeit überliefernd, die eigene Geborgenheit übernehmen und **augenblicklich** sein für «seine Zeit», (p. 385)]. If, thereby, the past is actual to the man until he lives, even more than that is actual to Jesus Christ Who, like God, He remains also man, and He relives eternally the past which He has like a man. Better said, He, like the most loving being from all the existing people, He lives above time, not separating Himself from the living of the present, the past and the future (According to Biswanger, w. c.).

¹³⁵ Widening this sense of the deeds, Eberhard Grisebach sees the general sense of the work into the establishment of the relations of the communion. The crises of the work and of the worker from today, comes from the fact that nobody know anymore its meaning. "Arbeit wrude zeitweiling um ihrer willen, ohne Beziehung zu einen Boden der Gemeinschaft betrieben 1. Sonlos ist jede Arbeit, welche den Boden der Gemeinschaft verloren hat und keiner Nachfrage mehr entsprich. 2. Sinnios ist die Arbeit, die nur des Arbeitenden willen geschieht, die dem Ertfolg und der befriedigung des Subjekts dient. 3. Sinnlos ist die Arbeit wiche Totes wiederholt, eine Wiederherstellung von Formen und Normen versucht, die längst ihre Beziehung zum Leben verhoren hat". (Die Schicksalsfrage des Abendlandes, Bern-Leipzig, 1942, p. 314, 316).

continuation; it has not remained only in the memory of the people. The deeds of Jesus Christ are arms stretched upon us. If Jesus is present when His words are spoken, which somehow Himself is whispering, the deed of His crucifixion will continue, in a mysteriously way. He sacrifices Himself on the altar each time when the Holy Liturgy is celebrated. A man who did a deed in which out of love he has put everything, in which he committed all his being, he permanently remains tied to his deed. Whenever he thinks about it, he feels the same tremble, he transposes in the same situation. He has the same state within him and the same overflowing of love like in the moment when he did that deed.

How much Jesus is tied to the deed of the crucifixion, we hardly can understand. It is a transposition of Him in the same state like when He was crucified, into the same total engagement, a painful one, like on Golgotha, but with the same voluntary and full love, like then. The words and the work of somebody, when that somebody has given all in them, they bring his person to front on any remembrance.

His work is the bridge which he throws permanently to the human being for tying it by His Person; it is the manifestation, it is the opening of His Person.

There is made, rightly, a difference between the deeds of somebody and the result of them. The result is regarded like staying outside of the person who founded it through his deeds. At Jesus, in no case, one could talk about a result in this sense. It cannot be conceived the result of His work, for instance, like one unlocking of the heavens for the people, the people following to enter the heaven without Him being needed any longer, or like a storage of divine grace from which the people impart themselves after He stepped aside. Jesus remains, all the time, the door of the salvation, the path, and the life.

One can talk about the result of Christ's work only in the sense that it was necessary to speak to the people the words of life and to do some deeds in order to save them, but this result which the people are impart with, it is indissoluble tied to His Person. He is Himself like one who did a certain work, He is Himself like one who placed Himself into a certain attitude towards people, by the fact that He spoke to them and He sacrificed Himself for them, so that He is Himself like One Who unveiled Himself and crystallized Himself towards people, through His words and deeds, in the look and in the attitude of maximum love. The embodiment was the premise; the embodiment was the first huge act of the divine love turned towards man. Through embodiment it has laid down the base of the development of the entire unveiling of His astonishing love, which went until the last end, the one of death. The unveiling of love is for the one in favor of whom it is done, the same with the establishment of love. To him, simply, the love didn't exist before. Therefore, the unveiling of the divine love it is the creator condition for the man's salvation. But the turn of the love of the Son towards man, and the development of its showing until His suffering and death, it is in the same time a reestablishment of the man in communion report with the Father, a satisfying of the communion law between man and God - according to which God has created the man -, a homage paid to the Father from the man's part and, thereby, an overflowing upon the man of the whole happiness which can be received by him in the situation of being partner in the communion with God. Jesus Christ, in the attitude in which He has unveiled Himself in the manifestation of His whole divine love towards man and of His entire human homage towards the Father, He is the subject who unlocked the hardened hearth of people through the love that He showed to them, but He is also the

man over Whom it is overflowing the whole benevolence of the Father towards people and in connection with Whom we are impart with the love of the Father.

Thus, the result of the work of Jesus Christ, through which we are saved, it is not but His personal state from the end of the fullest manifestation of the divine love towards people, and of the human homage towards the Father, towards God. We are saved through the connection with Jesus Christ Who has spoken to us and He repeats His godlike words through the man's mouth, and Who showed through His death His endless godlike love, manifesting through this the entire homage of the man towards the Father-God and having, therefore, upon Him, like the first one from us and for us, the love of the Father.

VII. 2. The Three Dignities of the Savior, in General

The savior work of Jesus Christ, though indissoluble tied to His Person, both in the effectuation and on the result of it which we are imparted with, it can be contemplated in itself, being given the fact it was necessary for the salvation of the people, and thus having a fundamental significance.

The Savior work of repairing and straightening our nature has been oriented on three directions.

One direction was that of reestablishing the connection with God, the connection which was broken through sin, so that Jesus has reconciled God with the man. This has been done through the ministration of the priesthood. The priest is the one who stays between the man and God and who accomplishes the reconciliation through prayer and sacrifice.

Another work of Jesus Christ was to illuminate the mind of the man while He lived on earth, and to continue this work through His entrusted ones, also after the Ascent to heavens.

Christ has also worked on the direction of strengthening and upholding the man in order the man to walk the right path. The man is weak, he cannot lead himself. Jesus came to support the man's will through His personal leading and through a leading mediated by His representatives. This is the work of a leader, of an emperor.

Behold the three kinds of works in order to reestablish of the mankind into its primordial state and in order to save the mankind. These three kinds of works are three sermons, they are three callings.

One who serves the another, he is a servant, but also a man who deserves the whole honor. His service is both a ministry and a dignity. Therefore, we are not wrong by calling these three ministrations as dignities too. Some people use the words: hierarchical service, but kingly dignity. One may call the high priesthood of Jesus as dignity too; likewise the leading work can be called ministration, for Jesus doesn't master in order to humiliate, or in order to satisfy His desire for mastery, but He masters in order to save, He masters like the gentle lamb, like the lamb who sacrifices Himself.

These three dignities or ministrations are not simple fantasies, or simple words, or empty names. In fact, Jesus has exercised, in the most proper sense, the hierarchical mission; He has truly accomplished the reconciliation between mankind and God, by bringing Himself sacrifice and by praying like nobody else. He has done and He continues doing the highest work of teacher, of prophet. All His work is either hierarchal ministration, or teaching ministration, or a kingly ministration. There does not exist act or word from His life, which cannot bear the character of one of these ministrations. All His manifestations, and the whole His respiration fits within one of these ministrations, so that the three dignities are anything else but the

way of manifestation and activity of His personality, in order to saving the people. To the depth of His being, He is absorbed into these three dignities and works. No one from the people, who are priests and teachers, is so much identified to these ministrations like Jesus Christ is. It is hard to the man through all his personality to identify himself with the priestly service, like also is hard to the teacher to fully identify himself, so much that all his personality to have the character of his ministration. The person of Jesus Christ, by being fully identified to these three ministrations, these are no longer simple accidental works of His, but Himself is fully hierarch, fully prophet, and fully king. Consequently, the three dignities are not empty titles, but the most right characterization of the entire divine-human mission and personality. The mission itself, which He fulfilled, the reason for which He embodied Himself and for which He works, it is expressed in these three ministrations or dignities.

We started to show that these three calling represent the peaks of the missions which can be fulfilled by people on earth. They are the most beautiful and the most necessities. They ennoble the life of the human kind and crown all the other activities of her. But, while at the people we find these divided, at Jesus Christ we find them concentrated. Among people, some of them are teachers, other ones are priests and other ones are kings, but into Jesus are concentrated all these three and each one is in Him in the supreme degree.

From what we have told about the indissoluble connection between His manifestations and His Person, but also from other consideration which we are going to mention, it turns out that, at Jesus Christ, we have not only disparate and accidental deeds of a teacher, of a hierarch and of a king, like some Protestant theologians affirms, but Himself is, through His being and through His mission of embodied Son of God:

prophet, hierarch, and king. God in Himself, in His internal reports, is neither a prophet, nor a king, and He is even less a hierarch. But immediately that He creates an inferior world, still a spiritual one, which He wants to stay into a report with, He is its teacher, and its king. In report with the man, God is also the man's teacher and the man's leader by excellence. Even if the man hadn't had sin and God hadn't embodied Himself, God still would have been the teacher and the king of the man. Hierarch, however, the Son of God is only after the man's falling, like the one who embodies Himself and mediates like man to God. But, even if He is a hierarch like man, though, if this man hadn't constituted, through embodiment, the Son of God, He couldn't have been a hierarch. God gives the man the power of the high priesthood, because who else can obey God, except the ones who enjoy the divine grace in front of Him? And the fully listened to, by God, is that man Who is, in the same time, the Son of God. If the dignity of a teacher and of a king of Jesus Christ, it has its last source into His quality of God, the dignity of a hierarch by excellence, He has it through His quality of the fullest Mediator between man and God, assembling into His Person, ontologically, both the one and the another one, by being both in the camp of God, Who must be reconciled, and also in the camp of the people, who are begging for reconciliation.

But, when saying that the dignity of a teacher and of a king of Jesus Christ it has its ultimate basis into His godhead, we do not forget that through embodiment, the Son of God has become a different teacher and king, like He was before. And this new form of His dignity of a prophet and of a king, it stays in contact with His humanity, like also His quality as hierarch. Of course, the Son of God was a teacher and a king of the mankind also before the embodiment,

but, in the precise sense needed and related to the work of salvation; Christ has all of the three dignities only since the embodiment. The dignities have their reason in His godhead; Christ hasn't received them from outside. But they express the mission in the ministration which He embodied Himself for. He has received them like a duty from the Father and through them He does the work of salvation. Jesus is the Anointed One and the Apostle of God in all these three dignities.

Thereby, the prophetic calling of Jesus Christ it is something else than the quality of a teacher which the Son had before His embodiment, though it explains itself through that. Likewise, the kingly dignity on the plan of salvation it is something else than the kingly dignity in the creational order simply. And the hierarchal servitude is the heart of the mission which He has taken through embodiment, by having the divine indication into the eternal plan of God or, even in the decision from before the eternity to create spiritual beings with whom to maintain a report of communion, which it means, when looking at the things from a certain point of view, a humiliation of God, to which humiliation the quality of hierarch of the Son it gives it an accentuated expression.

Like teacher, in His pre-human existence, the Son of God teaches the people from far, by not entering a personal relation with the people, but by communicating, in a mysterious way, only to some of them, His divine will, or by offering through nature, through the circumstances which He brings them into, or through the prophets, the possibility of knowing God. Like prophet, though, Himself takes the real form of a human teacher, by speaking with a mouth, and through words, like the humans do. By making Himself a prophet, the Son of God, on one hand, He has humiliated Himself, but, on the other hand, He has accomplished the communion and He has been

teaching the people in the clearest and most perfect way. The prophet is the interpreter of His being and will, or, better said, He has expressed those without intermediaries, but through the human kind of expression. God has been speaking even after the embodiment of the Logos through the unspecified but impressive suggestions, of the nature and of the experiences. But, besides this natural Revelation - an insufficient one - He talks to us also with the human mouth through His Gospel. The man intuits the will of God by regarding himself also through the illnesses and troubles that he experiences and, regarding the contemporaries, also through the voice of history. But, by hearing the word of God through the Gospel, the man fully understands what God wants with him or with the contemporary world. The natural revelation is a propedeutic¹³⁶ to the revelation done through prophets and, ultimately, to the one done through the words themselves spoken with the mouth of the Son of God, called man, namely prophet.

Likewise, like king, into the creational order, the Son of God leads the Universe and the destiny of the mankind in an almighty way, before and after the embodiment, by influencing the history and intervening into it, by leading on unforeseen - by man - paths the man's destiny, by preserving the order of the nature, and by governing the whole Universe with the observation of the elastic frames of the natural laws and powers, and of the human wills. He activates on this plane, somehow from hidden, without entering a clear personal report with the man. As such, He is not into a function of an envoy, neither He has not the dignity of a king like as an office in the service of the

¹³⁶ From French word "propédeutique", which means a preliminary education which comprises the basic elements of a science.

salvation. The dignity of a king into the work of salvation He receives it from the Father like an entrustment, like a ministration, and it is differently exercised, not through the almightiness which forces, but through the truth which illuminates, through the love which conquers the souls, through the lamb's sacrifice which impresses and touches the souls. Into the work of the salvation, He accomplishes the paradox of the Lamb that reigns. Of course, we distinguish in the activity of Jesus commanding words and gestures, and ordering and founding ones too. But there commands the love, which does not force, but it urges. In His Savior life there are also deeds of a power from above nature, and which is above death. But it is a power manifested through the organs of the human nature and started from the spirit of the savior love. In a certain sense, this kingly dignity it is a kenotic dignity. It is a weird king in the eyes of the crowd which wanted Him on the throne of the worldly power. But He is a king Who has, over the souls who adhere to Him, more power than any other earthly king. Like a worker of the salvation, He is a king of the Church, of the heavenly Kingdom. Only like a king of the creational order He raises and crushes the kingdoms. But between the two faces of His kingly dignity there is a close bond, not only because through the kingly power manifested on the creational plan, He upholds, for example, through the State, the order, the necessary frame which the salvation of the people it is accomplished in, but also because the manifestation of His power into the unrests of the history and in the painful experiences of the individual life, He raises the man towards receiving Him like a Savior¹³⁷. The form of

¹³⁷ This idea, that in the historical shakings Jesus works through another manner to raise the people to the report with Him like a savior, Herman Sauer developed it in his epochal work "Abendländische Entscheidung".

the kingly dignity on the creational plan let itself to be put in the service of the salvation reigning. Without that form to contribute itself to the salvation, He is carried rather by the longsuffering than the severity, and through it, Jesus the Pantocrator, He wants to be a pedagogue towards Jesus the Savior. The sufferings and the punishments, even of the people unconverted to him, have not a character of an ultimate punishment, but it aims to the awakening of the conscience, that through them God searches for them like a Savior.

We have told that the kingly dignity is one from the highest three dignities from world. As noble are the dignities of teacher and of priest, as high it is also the dignity of king, in his quality of a leader of soul. On His function it depends to lead the people to the best and to the right targets of the life. Only the one who wishes the good for the ones whom he leads, he is a true leader. People do not possess enough resources of will, in order to step alone towards the target of their life. Though, they will be able reach the targets if there are leaders, who, through their authority, they make the people willingly obey their leadership. The teacher has the mission to illuminate the people. But not all the teachers inspire authority, though they are in the first place indicated to share convictions and certitudes. The priest is a mediator. He has also authority over the souls, but it is not his exclusive mission to lead the people. Only the king is the true leader. For the salvation of the souls Jesus possesses also this dignity.

He gathers into Himself all of the three dignities on a supreme degree. Into Him it finds also this leadership service its supreme accomplishment. He leads us towards the ultimate targets of the life, because He has authority over the souls, like doesn't have any worldly leader.

There has not existed a leader in the world who to maintain, over centuries, the same authority upon the souls, like Christ does. The people died for Jesus, they die, and they are going to die, century after century. The most people are and they will be able to obey Jesus with the whole their being. It is not obedience for some interest that is achievable in this world, neither is a shallow obedience, but it is a total submission of the most intimate fibers of the human being.

This quality of a king it expresses His calling like Lord. The Christian addresses to Him: "The Lord and the Master of my life". In the primary centuries of Christianity, the nomination of Lord given to Jesus has meant absolute Sovereign, to whom the man obeys like a slave, an absolute Master upon the depths of the being, a Master upon the life and death of the people. Like that the believers experienced Jesus, especially after His Ascension, and so the primary Christian communities called Him. Until today we have been understanding under the name of Lord, attributed to Jesus, a totally different meaning than that of a worldly king. Jesus Christ is not a Lord who inspires you fear, but He is a Lord of Whose authority is a joy to you, a Lord Who you obey with the fullest conviction. The believers feel Jesus Christ like a Lord in Whom they can support themselves with the whole confidence, like a Lord Who does not depend, at His turn, on somebody else. They feel that at Him there is the ultimate source of power, the ultimate wall where they find shelter. It is a happiness generating experience for the one who has it.

How happy is the child when he feels the power, the authority of his father! If he feels that his father hesitates, he will cease to be happy. The true leader is experienced by the one who has the power inside him, not a physic power, but a spiritual one, like the one who knows what he wants and who is capable to lead us to the target known to Him. We, the people, we

realize that we have not the full certitude inside us. But, in Jesus Christ we feel a definitive surety. We feel the earthly leaders as they possess a limited authority. Jesus Christ is being experienced, nevertheless, like One Who has power and, so, He has absolute authority, and Who grants us an unlimited support. The one who believes in Jesus Christ, he has a limitless trust, which cannot be interrupted by any doubt. This means that Jesus Christ is truly a King; He is the Lord of the Lords, and He is the absolute Master over the whole your being. This experience is not a sign of inferiority, but it gives confidence to the one who had it, an unshaken surety in life, and that man also receives a power resembling to the power of Jesus Christ, which imposes to the fellow humans and it makes them to believe in Him. With how much pleasure and joy the Christian tells the words: "The Lord and the Master of my life". It is here a devotion which absorbs his entire hearth. Then he feels himself truly powerful.

The dignity of leader in Jesus Christ it is closely tied to the dignity of teacher and of priest, but that does not mean that they cannot be distinguished. All the more, these dignities are distinguished to the people. There doesn't exist any man on earth who to comprise all these three dignities. Although, a leader who is not able to be a teacher too, he is a blind leader. Also, a teacher who is not, at his turn, able to lead with authority the ones whom he teaches, towards the desired targets, he is not fully a teacher. Leader is also the priest who sacrifices himself, who puts his life for the salvation of the souls of his parish. But only Jesus Christ has accomplished the true leader. Out of His example take substance the new forms of the relations between the leaders and their adherents. Here is seen again the righteousness of the Christianity, which remains continuously a source of inspiration to the

people. Jesus Christ is a leader in the spiritual meaning of the word. He hasn't come to be served, but to serve. The leaders of the peoples master the people, while Jesus Christ has come, as Himself tells us: "to give His life for people". Jesus Christ does not master by force, by sword, or through any other element of constraint, but He conquers the will of the people exclusively by spiritual means. The truth and the love, these are the means which He masters the souls through, these are the force, and these are His sword.

Who experiences the love of Jesus, he is unable not to love Him. But the love of Jesus is present together with His authority, and this makes us to lean upon Him with the whole confidence. The love of Jesus is a love which went to death for us. At our turn, our love for Him is capable to go to death for Him. Jesus has come to conquer us, to move us through the power of His love. That's why it is told in the Apocalypse that Jesus is the King-Lamb, that He reigns not through violence, but through gentleness and through His sacrifice. This thing seems a paradox to us, because we know that the lamb is humble and disregarded; and, though, the Lamb is a king in Christianity.

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In this way, whether the godhead, being the ultimate source of light, of purity, and of power, shows Jesus like having in His being the three dignities, by the fact that He meets in His hypostasis the humanity, being the most proper mediator between God and people and the only Savior, through the full manifestation of the divine love, He appears also in the new quality of a bearer of the prophetic power, and of the hierarchal and of the kingly ones. Jesus Christ is - based on His theandric nature - the Prophet, the Hierarch and the King, by excellence. The three dignities are not something else but the expression of

His savior Being.

All over the place, the raising of a man, like a spiritual being, it cannot be done except through an activity and, so, through a love for this threefold character. They are the natural, and they are inevitable manifestation of the love of a superior spiritual being towards an inferior one, on which the superior being wants to raise the inferior being to the equality of the communion and, so, to happiness. That's why, they are everything that is more noble on earth, in the relations amongst people. But their sublime form hasn't been accomplished except in Jesus Christ.

VIII.

The Prophetic Dignity

VIII. 1. Jesus Christ – the Biggest Prophet

The mission of teacher is one of the three culminant missions on world.

And this is not because the teacher unveils an impersonal world of ideas and technical knowledge, but because he leans upon a soul with love, by making him to raise at his height¹³⁸, because he conveys him not exterior things, but on himself, taking place a raising of the disciple into the most intimate “space” of the teacher¹³⁹.

It is a work of love towards even more love. This work starts from the love of the teacher, and then, moment by moment, as the teacher’s love is being revealed, in order to make to be born also the love of the disciple, by bonding through an even deeper love the two souls, and by setting up a report of total understanding and of unspeakable communion between them. The way of the teaching, like a deepening of the report between those two persons, it is the way to communion, towards the constitution of a dual unity (Wirrheit), being also the way to

¹³⁸ “Three are the ones who master on earth”, says in the Goethe’s story, the old man, stepping between the young man and the virgin: “The wisdom, the brightness, and the force”. “You have forgotten the fourth` power, which masters the world from before, a more general and surer one”, raises his objection the young man, “the power of love”; at the old man answers this laughing: “the love is not mastering, she forms (die Liebe herrscht nicht, sie bildet) and this is something more”. Cf. L. Binswanger, w. c. p. 265.

¹³⁹ On this distinction insists L. Binswanger in his monumental work cited, p. 237 and others.

“salvation” of one of the two persons, of that person’s raising at the rank of a subject capable of communion.

The teacher is the one who approaches more intimately his soul to the soul of the other, for his mission is the service in the favor of humanity, of developing the humanity in every human individual. Though in the teacher-disciple report, the first one has a superior position, the last one feels as happy as his teacher; neither the first one notices in his intimate and continuous living his superiority, nor the last one his notices his inferiority. Each one forgets about himself and sees only the other one, hanging the whole meaning of his existence on the other; neither of them feels disadvantaged. It is here a hierarchy without distance, without proud, and without humiliation.

If there is a functional inequality, it constitute to the superior one an obligation to serve, and not a title of claims, and to the inferior one it is transformed in equality through love.

The respect is together with the love. Thereby, the teacher-disciple report is the consummate model of any relation between the spiritual beings of a special degree.

We can see how far from truth are the Protestant theologians when they separate the word from love, either to Jesus, or in the teaching of the Church¹⁴⁰.

Because the Son of God has embodied Himself also on the purpose to make Himself teacher to the people, He has brought the form of the teacher to its ultimate consummation, namely to the interweaving of the word with the love.

If the teachers job is the noblest thing on earth, for

¹⁴⁰ See, for example, at E. Brunner in his books: **Der Mittler** and **Wort und Mystik**, or at K. Barth, who dilutes the divine revelation in Jesus, by seeing in Him only the word which came from inaccessible distances, without bringing with it a more felt closeness of God.

being related to the light and by having like purpose the raising of the spiritual man, in love and communion, then it is from God. The teacher continues God in His work of shaping of the man created by God. At God is the source of teaching and He alone has from Himself the capacity to make Himself the consummate Teacher of the people, by establishing between Him and them, in a perfect form, the Teacher-disciple report. It is characteristic to the teacher to have love towards his disciple, before the disciple having any love towards his teacher, God like Teacher meets this ministration in a supreme degree, by not making His love depending on anybody's love, like is the case of the people.

We could tell that the function of a teacher is general amongst people. Every man was or is teacher to one or of more of his fellow humans, and no one is a teacher to everybody, but he is a disciple too. So, everyone experiences the responsibility of rising up some fellow humans, but also the relativity of his capacity and of his authority like teacher. Through both it is sustained the chaining of the people and, all over the place, the job of a relative teacher, with its double aspect of responsibility and dependence, it is one of the general laws through which it is accomplished the intimacy amongst people, an existential element of the man's structure, indicating towards a divine origin and asking for a fulfillment through a consummate Teacher, Who, by being a man, He is, in the same time, God. This accomplishing has taken place in Jesus Christ. Christ, by being the absolute Teacher of the people, He didn't experience the dependence on other people in this regard, but, just for that, He has assumed, in the supreme degree, the responsibility towards people, and the supreme responsibility has tied Him, more than on anyone else, to the people.

Though, Jesus has placed Himself into a state of

dependence, not towards people, but towards God, but because of the people. This is for, Jesus is not simply, a teacher, but He is a prophet. And the prophet is more than a teacher, for he is the conveyer of a godlike teaching, as God's envoy. He does not take the teaching from the human mind, from His mind or from the mind of others, neither from the scientific experiment, but He receives it directly from God, having, consequently, a different character from all that can be known through reasoning or human experience. This teaching is superior by the fact that it refers to the being and to the will of God, and it contributes to the salvation of the man. But, on these features, which distinguish the teaching of the prophet from all the human teachings, we will insist further on.

Here we remark that the prophet, by being an envoy of God, his being is a sign that there is a certain circumstance which impedes the man's direct knowledge about God. This impediment cannot be but the sin, once that the simple fact that the human is a creature it does not stop God to destine him for a future full union with Himself. The sin has a voluntary humanly origin, which infected and thickened the man's power of understanding. Because the reality which the man has to know, even if consists in nothing else but in the loving communion with God, he won't know it because he won't be able to place himself in that communion due to his egotistic will. The will of God, to make the man to know Him, is not enough. The man also, must force to purify himself of sin, namely of the spiritual egotism, of the proud and the sensual egotism of pleasures and passions.

How can though, some people, namely the prophets, to know God, so that, at their turn, they to communicate His will to the people? The fact is explained somewhat through the exceptional moral character of the ones called to be prophets. Being given

the fact that the prophets will leaned entirely towards God, even if God has operated in them a purification through an act especially rapid in its efficacy, this fact wouldn't have been but an exception which confirms both the sinfulness of the big masse of the people, but also the God's will to not let them without any communication from His part.

The prophet, being a mediator of God towards people, is a demonstration of their sinfulness, of the separation between God and people. This is a fact which must to be highlighted. But just because the people cannot know God directly, their knowledge must to bear the character of the faith. The prophets make people to believe, not to now; or they transmit to them a knowledge based on faith. This is the second fact. And behold how the wisdom of God turns the things so as to, from a disadvantageous situation of the people, creates the possibility to know Him through faith, namely in the form in which he makes them to live. Either they would know God directly, or that they know Him through faith, mediated by prophets, the result is the same: the life into the ones who know Him. God cannot be knew, without that His knowledge itself not to be life.

Even if the knowledge of the prophet has rather a character of faith, and not of experience, not of a direct sight. God presents Himself to the people with a certitude in which we feel the voluntary manhood of the faith. From His certitude lightens the certitude of the ones who listen to him. It is true that the Holy Scripture describes the diverse mysterious experiences and sight, which the prophets had. But these do not exclude, and they rather imply the faith. God still didn't show Himself unveiled... The prophet needed the faith in order to admit that under all of these forms there is God. The epistle towards the Jews, chapter 11, speaks aprioristically about the faith of the prophets (especially in the verse 32 and the followings). This

confirms us the thesis that, by being given the sinfulness of the people, there doesn't exist even one man to see God uncovered. The prophets make no exception. Of course, we can reduce the experience of the dialog with God, which the prophets had, to a simple faith resembling to the one of the other people. They have a kind of experiencing the reality, the divine presence, a "sight", but though not as the faith would be unnecessary. Otherwise, the faith of every man is a kind of mysterious experience which has been produced and which persists within the soul, on the reality of God and on the communication of the things the prophet believed through God. The faith has a dialectic sense, being, on one hand, faith in the precise sense of the word, and on the other hand, experience, mysterious "sight" of the things which cannot be seen.

Given the fact that the man really grows up to the rank of a subject responsible towards God and towards his fellow humans, through faith, and also the faith is the bridge which connects, in the most mysterious and intimate way, the soul of whom transmits it and of whom receives it, the prophet who produces it he presents himself like the highest one from the teachers. Different from the sight, the faith endorses the man to his fellow human. Through sight, through science, the sinful ones cannot get out from their sin, which consists of pride, of egotism, and in the isolated receiving and tasting of a spiritual good. Only the faith brings them into communion, and only the faith gets them out from the sin.

The prophet is, otherwise, on one hand, a humble man. He "does not know", but he "believes". He does not rely onto his discoveries and onto his reasoning, but on what God communicates him. But, on the other hand, he does not demonstrate through reasoning or intuitions his teachings, but he affirms his certitudes, and on another hand, or maybe just because of that,

he is the teacher who exceeds any other worldly teacher, by creating in his fellow humans the same certitudes, by giving them birth at the rank of true people and by tying them to himself and among them, with a sincere, deep, and un-perishing love.

About Jesus, the Holy Scripture tells us that He is a supreme prophet. We must find at Him, thereby, both the humbleness of the prophet, and the features which give Him the supreme place among the prophets.

In fact, Jesus, like a prophet, like a human interpreter of God's will, though He is the Son of God Himself, He still is an "envoi" of the Father and, so, He fulfills this assignment in an uninterrupted connection with the Father. He places Himself in the humble situation towards the Father, and He explicitly asks for a prior approval from the Father, in order to unveil the divine mysteries and to assure the people about the saving love of the Father, confident in His consent.

On this way, the prayer of Jesus towards the Father, it is not only the manifestation of His hierarchal ministration, but it is also the manifestation of the prophetic ministration. The prayer is an intersection of these two dignities of His. If through His hierarchal ministration He presents Himself to the people in the name of God, and through the prophetic calling He presents Himself to the people like a God's envoy, basically, in both cases is also about a man, about the man Whom God really consented with, to mediate the reconciliation, and the closeness between God and people.

Jesus is not a teacher Who not to send to anybody, beside Him, the attention of the people. Through this He diminishes Himself in front of the people, He presents Himself in the name of God, by making Himself a teacher and, in humbleness, and in the need of every man to lean himself on God, and not on himself, in the problems which his eternal destiny depends on.

But, the character of a mediator, between God and people, of Jesus Christ, like a prophet, it consist, especially, in the fact that He translates through the means of His human being the mysteries of the divine will.

If the Son of God had shown Himself to us in a unveiled way, He wouldn't have been a prophet. But, He descended Himself on the human level. He has made our fellow human, in order to bring to our understanding the possibility to understand the godlike mysteries. The prophet is the human translator of the godlike mysteries, he is the mediator of them towards people, by putting them into the human vessels. Jesus fulfilled the service of a prophet, appropriating himself, through humbleness, the human means to communicate them. He presented Himself to the people in a humble human form; He did for them the ministration of a prophet. When the philosopher lets somebody else to interpret his ideas in the ordinary people language, that interpreter is some kind of philosopher's prophet. But, when himself comes among the ordinary people, adopting their vocabulary, he makes himself his own prophet. For a man, the function of being a prophet of God is a rising, while for the Son of God is a descending, it is a kenotic function. The Son of God, by descending Himself to speak to the people in the language that they can understand, He came in the maximum closeness to them. While somebody sends a word to somebody else, through an intermediary, this means that he wants to keep a distance. When he comes to speak to him directly, this means that he no longer keeps the distance. The communication through word, out of love, it is the supreme approach in the order of the human life.

The Son of God, through the prophetic mission, made Himself His interpreter on an inferior plan; He

descended on an inferior ontological stage. He transposed the godlike things into our modest forms. He made Himself His own "forerunner", like Maximos the Confessor said. He descended like a pedagogue at the man's understanding, to raise him at the godlike things¹⁴¹.

Himself, like a unique subject of the two natures, He is in this way aware of being not only God, but also a mediator of God, because He does not unveil the godhead as such, but He manifests the godhead through the powers of the human nature. The one who speaks to the people is God, but God in a role of a prophet, of an interpreter of His godhead and of the entire Holy Trinity. He is God and prophet in the same time, unveiler and coverer of the godhead, God who is working alone to His unveiling, but, though, through mediation, being to Himself the only translator and mediator. Through all He says and shows to the people, He drives their attention at what is beyond word, beyond the seen reality. The godhead is beyond. His Word is only mediation. His ministration of a teacher of

¹⁴¹ "The teacher, bearer of God (Saint Gregory of Nazianzus), called Him His forerunner, like the One Who unveiled Himself, according to the things received from the Old New Testament and from the New Testament, by walking Himself in front of Himself, through riddles, expressions, and types, and, through them, leading at the truth from beyond". Maximos the Confessor, Migne, G. P. 91, 1253 D. See also Hans Urs von Balthasar, w. c. p. 196. "He accepted to be created without any change in our species, due to His immeasurable love for people and to become a type and a symbol of Himself and to show us Himself out of a symbolic Self. Thereby, through Himself like a shown one, He led towards Himself like the One totally hidden with all the creation, and through the shown godlike works of the body, he gave to the people, with love, indices about the not shown and hidden reality from beyond all things, of which neither of the existences can in any way understand it and express it". G. P. 91, 1256 D; U. von Balthasar, W. C.

the godlike things it is one of mediation, of a prophetic character, and not that of an uncovered showing. He has continuously the conscience of this mission and of this work. The expression and the human showing are not, through themselves, the godhead; everything that is human, otherwise, it has not any right of an ultimate instance into the service of the teaching of the godlike things, but it indicates towards what is from above. Jesus, like a teacher-prophet, He does not want to stop the people's attention to Himself, to the showing and to His human word, but He sends it above, to what cannot be seen and expressed, to God, that means also to Him, regarded like more than seen and heard, more than "Jesus according to the body" (II Corinthians. 5, 16).

It is seen from the said things both what Jesus has in common with the prophets, and also what it shows Him like the supreme prophet. He is a interpreter, a mediator, an envoy of God to teach the people; He does not presents Himself like an unveiled God, but He hints to godhead like to a reality beyond word and beyond His look after the body. It is a descending on the level of the man. But, in the same time, this prophet is God Himself. He sends the attention above the word and above His human appearance, but not beyond Himself like a subject (not only a human one, but also a divine one) and not on a way strange from His word and appearance. At their basis, at the source of them, there is Him. He sends to Father but still through Himself¹⁴².

Whereas He is a prophet, whereas, therefore, He

¹⁴² Bible of King George, Gospel of John, 14, 8-9: "Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (E. 1. t.'n.)

does not show God unveiled but through interpretation, He must be believed like the prophets are. Precisely like those ones, He neither does demonstrate through reasoning and intuitions, but He affirms His certitudes. And the mysterious power of these certitudes make to be born identical certitudes in the souls of the listeners too, without being there any need for demonstrations. This is for the certitude itself, it has and it gives something from what is called experience, or seeing, it is something even superior to the “experience”, to the rational, or to the scientific “seeing”. Jesus, of course, He has only “seeing” not also faith in the precise sense, like the other prophets did. But, because He cannot give the listeners His “seeing”, like it is in itself, but He interprets it shrouded in His certitude, His listeners cannot learn His “seeing” except through faith. There is a difference between the faith that the listeners granted to the prophets and that one granted to Jesus like a Prophet-God. The difference consists not only in the fact that the certitude which irradiates from Jesus it has a different intensity and the godlike “seeing” which He interprets to them it has an amplitude, a clarity, and a depth incomparably larger, but, especially, in the fact that the prophet does not pretend the faith “in His person”, but only “in His communication” (actually, these differences have a common base).

The interpretation given by the prophet it does not refer to his person. Its thread leads towards God on a path which is exterior to the prophet and to a subject, other than his. Confident in the word of the prophet, the listener forgets about the prophet and he goes with the faith towards the direction which this word leads him in. The mediation of the prophet lasts only for an instant. After he has indicated God, he steps aside.

Jesus, nevertheless, He pretends the faith not only in the word, but also in His Person. He calls the listeners through word, or actually, above the word,

but still towards Himself like God, for God is in Himself and not outside Him. He is an envoy of the Father, He wants to show the Father to the world, but the Father is into Himself. The word spoken by Him does not serve like an indication towards a reality different from Him. The word does not show a target outside Him, it does not interpret a foreign reality, but on Himself. The one who speaks and the one about it is spoken, there are not two of them, but there is about one and the same. At the prophet, the word is of the man, and God is the reality foreign to the man.

At Jesus, like a Prophet-God, between word and God, there is no more a duality; the word is of God, not of man (or the words is of a man who is in the same time God) and in the word there is God, and not the man; that's why it must not be searched for into a direction foreign from the subject Who has spoken the word, but the words is himself the One Who has spoken it. The word is no longer empty of God, like a simple arrow towards God, but it has God like its support. The word, in this case, has no longer the same value which it has when it is detached from the one who speaks it. In this case, the word is the same with the subject who speaks it. When is it spoken, the word of Jesus comprise in itself the godlike reality. The Word and God are one and the same. The listeners of the prophets believed in their word like in an indication towards God. The listeners of Jesus believe in His word like manifesting God Himself. The word ties them to the Speaker, and not send them towards Him. The word of the prophet cannot liberate you from the conscience that something humanly takes place between you and God. The word of Jesus places you in an unmediated manner in front of God. There is an indissoluble union between word and reality, between word and God. While, commonly, the word is of the man, leading - like to something foreign - towards God,

in Jesus the word of the man, without ceasing to be of the man, it is also of God, for the man Who speaks, in this case, He is in the same time God. The dialectic of God's revelation through Jesus Christ like a supreme Prophet it presents like this: here God unveils Himself directly, and He is no behind of a human subject. God Himself is the One Who speaks to the people. This is the mysterious experience which can be, gained by faith, in front of Jesus. The word, though, it is human. The mystery consists in the fact that, though the word does not comprise the unveiled showing of God, and therefore it appeals to faith, it produces though the certitude and the experience that the one who speaks it is God. What is seen and heard it is a human environment and instrument, but this instrument produces, like certitude, like an experience, the faith that is handled by the godlike subject. God "unveils" Himself, in other words, in Jesus Christ like a subject but not like a seen reality. The believer is sure about the presence of God like a subject; he knows Him like a subject, he experiences Him, even if the believers does not see the godhead.

Of course, the unveiling of the subject it does not stay in its "seeing". The subject does not impart himself to the senses. The noticing of the subject has a spiritual-ethical character. In general, we are noticing the subject of the others as we become ourselves subjects, the faith contributing to this in a great measure, by allowing to sound in our ethical depth the reality of the other like a claim, like a commandment, and not like a thing which stays at our disposition. The subject of God unveils Himself to us in Jesus, like an overwhelming claim, like an absolute Master of us.

God unveils Himself like a subject in Jesus, through His word, to the one who feels himself overwhelmed by the torrent of mastering, of commanding authority, but also of love which emanates from Him, pouring down

in his own hearth¹⁴³. (We observe again how the dignities of Jesus meet, are like a polyhedron; Jesus like prophet He is also king). For Jesus presented Himself like a man and He spoke through human words, God was not seen. But, because some people felt in front of this man like in front of God, He revealed Himself. Because the ones to whom the godlike subject unveiled Himself into the man Jesus, the words which they were experiencing the godlike authority of this subject through, those words were no longer human words, but they were godlike words. They cannot distinguish anymore between His words like human sounds, and His subject like God. His godlike authority was in His words. His godlike authority cannot be manifested but through His words. The human word of Jesus - by being the necessary means to God's showing among people and like a prophet, of His unveiling like a subject in the sinful state which people are in - it is the divine subject Himself in His manifestation among people. He was impropriated by God, being made image of His showing among people.

The word of Jesus, though human, was having in it something which exceeded the human. "(M't:7:28:) And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: (M't:7:29:) For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." says the Gospel. Through Him, the

¹⁴³ Whether where the man is no longer able to make the act to transcend from himself to the world, to others, he is overwhelmed by despair because of the lack of meaning of his existence and he ends in suicide, and the fullest transcendence is accomplished in the loving meeting with the other, in whom it is concentrated for the own self the fullness of the existence. (See L. Bingswanger, w. c. p. 596 and others), in Jesus, the believer has like a supreme source of life, the supreme transcendence and, in relation with Him, the believer experiences the transcending which gives him an infinite increasing of the existence.

crowd was experiencing the infinity of love itself, of power and of authority of God, like, for instance, otherwise, we are experiencing some infinity in the report of love with one of our fellow humans.

Søren Kierkegaard has spoken about a consummate incognito of God under the appearance of a man (in the writing: *Einübung im Christentum*) and, consequently, he considered the faith like an act of the believer's purely heroic decision, a jump into the void, with the confidence that he will find the firm ground. Jesus appeared exclusively like a man. Neither His contemporaries could, nor can we find support in any of His manifestations for our decision to believe. This decision is fed exclusively from our boldness, from our capacity to risk.

But then we could believed to every other humble man that he is God; the faith would have been a totally subjective act, an arbitrary one.

No matter how much wanted Kierkegaard, or after him the Protestant dialecticians theologians, to remove any objective support of the faith in Jesus as God, they must admit some of the subjective reasons. So, for example, not any other man on world, who has behaved with seriousness and moral noblesse, he has affirmed, ever, that he is God, except Jesus. If there wasn't any other, at least this element is admitted by all the mentioned theologians like an objective motif for the ones who "dare" to believe just Jesus like God, and no any other man. Kierkegaard supports his "dare" of the faith also on the moral uniqueness of Jesus. He has done in the Protestant theology the biggest case of Jesus like "model" for life. But this is one of the classic objective criteria of the veracity, of the dignity of credence of a mediator of the Revelation.

So, also according to these theologians, there was something in the manifestations of Jesus which was raising Him above any man. They also admit that the listeners had experienced this. So, God was not into an

absolute incognito.

The same dialecticians theologians grant, on the other hand, to the word of Jesus, the virtue that it created and that has been creating until today, in people, the certitude that He is God, so they are saw and they have been seeing in this word a power differing from the one which the word of the men has it.

The human word has become, so, means of God's revealing, of the revealing like a subject, not of showing, but though, not of a simple affirmation, but of creation of an experience, of a "seeing" into the souls of the listeners.

Of course, the self-revelation of God through word and human manifestation it is not equal to the self-revelation of God in an unveiled way, but it remains far away behind it. The unveiling of God in Jesus Christ is only an unveiling under the veil of the being and of the means of the human manifestation.

But, though, the human word of Jesus gives not only the certitude that He is God, but it is also a means through which the man dives into the godlike environment, into the infinity of the divine reality. The human word, by and large, it has the mystical character that cannot be circumscribed in an exact way to an intellectual meaning, but it brings with it also something from the being who speaks it, so that it is an emanation of that being, an overflowing of that being in front of the listener. The one who hears the word of a fellow human, he is capable to distinguish him from any other man and to shape and to spiritually feel his individuality. The revelation of the man through word it is not only a revelation of his thoughts, but also of his being¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴⁴ The word, like any other manifestation of the man, it is what is called today in psychology a configuration (Gestalt), a symbol, which in a precise limited shape it comprises all the

The word of Jesus has this virtue. Through His word, Jesus Christ causes into the listeners the experience of His godhead. And even today, His words are causing this experience. The words of Jesus from Gospels, even without the mysterious coefficient these words were given by the Person of Jesus in the moment of which He told them, they are of such a nature that, though being taken from the content of the human vocabulary and intelligible for man, they have within the virtuality of some unlimited meanings. They are understood by the simple man, because they are words from his intellectual range. But they are satisfying also the finest intellectual. And no one of them considers that they have exhausted the meanings of those words, but they feel that they have impropriated only a small part from them. Everyone makes the experience of the one who, after he descended by the sea, and even by being in contact with the sea, he cannot tell that he knows the sea entirely. The words of the Gospel, they also represent a hypostatic union of the mankind with the divinity, by being a manifestation of this union.

Of course, the faith, in the precise sense of the word, it is necessary. No matter how overwhelming Jesus Christ would have manifested through word and deed, an ill will could slip from under the power of the speech and of His manifestation of a godlike subject.

In the fact that not all His listeners were obliged to ascertain that Jesus was God, it consists the cause due to which the mentioned Protestant theologians would want to consider God like being present entirely incognito in Jesus and the faith being exclusively an act of subjective dare. This phenomenon can be

indescribable depth of a person, even the infinite of a love. The tragic thing is that a positive judgment can see only the precise outline, the material one, the rational one, out of such a symbol. But that judgment is blind in front of the reality. (Cf. L. Binswanger, w. c.).

sufficiently explained if we will take into consideration also the factor of sin, from man. The revelation presents itself, actually, with objective criteria and objectives, which distinguish the revelation from everything that is a simple human manifestation, but the experiencing by man of these objective criteria and features it depends on the will of the man to step over the egotistic and autonomist self-pride. If somebody wants to listen seriously to the word of Jesus, by defeating the easiness of his sinful prejudgments, it is impossible to him not to have the experience that here welcomes him a superhuman reality. The faith is also a question of will, because everything Jesus says and does it can be left to slip over the skin of the hearing and of the sight, or it can be misinterpreted, evaporating everything that it has different – and, so, the faith is an act of decision – but it is not less true that, just by the fact that it is necessary this easiness for the hiding of what Jesus represents differently from everything that is human, this different something exists and if the man do not force himself to slight it, but a contrary, he pays the deserved attention to it, he will have the experience which founds his *faith*.

It is, therefore, in the first place, something objective in the spiritual manifestation of Jesus Who knocks on the door of the heart, of our will, and surprises us. This is the first moment of the report of the man with Jesus. The second moment is the positive or the negative attitude to this objective something. Natural is the positive movement of our being, which is a prolongation of the moment of surprise, of recognition of the absolute novelty of the element which welcomes us from Jesus Christ. The negative attitude is a cutting off, a sluice of the first flux of our being, and a covering of the element of supra-humanity which surprises us in Jesus Christ, and this is, thereby, an unnatural inclination but which is

according to our numbness into sin, to the opacity towards everything tries to break our egotistic horizon and our autonomist commodity, which do not want to accept a master and even more an absolute master like God is.

In this way, the faith in Jesus Christ like God, or the experience on which founds and with which the faith is one and the same, it is born out of two factors: one objective and one subjective. Through the subjective factor it is seen the objective one. So it can be explained his apparent value of decisive, or even unique, factor. This, though, it does not mean that the subjective factor could be produced without the prior existence of the objective one. The subjective factor is stimulated by the objective one, without this one to force the first one to produce himself.

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Summarizing the things told about Jesus like a prophet in report with other prophets, in common with them He has the followings:

Jesus offers, like the priest does, knowledge of God through interpretation in the human language, through mediation, not through showing, this interpretation constituting thereby a humiliation of the Son of God on the levels of the people.

That's why, He gives birth to the faith, to the certitude within the people who want to believe, and not the seeing which everybody must admit. But just through this, the receiving of the godlike things is a step to get out from the sin. Just the circumstance that the man, due to his sin, he is not able to "see" the godlike things, and so somebody must bring the godlike things close to him through faith, God uses it for elevating the man from sin.

But Jesus surpasses all the prophets, by being the supreme and the last prophet, for:

He mediates the connection and translates the will of God towards people, not like the will of a foreign

subject, but like His own will.

The divine revelation which He accomplishes it is, therefore, not only the fullest possible, through its amplitude and clearness, but it is also of other character, because through Him the people make the experience of the “*me-you*” report with God. When a person speaks directly to us and not through a mediator, we experience his reality in a more intensive way. And, through the prophets, we acquire the certitude that God is subject, thereby just the same we learn also through Jesus. But through the prophets, we experience God like One Who has just spoken to a fellow human, but now He has left us, turning His back to us. In Jesus we have God permanently with His face towards us, speaking to all of us, and we have Him in a maximum closeness and not at a distance from us.

The prophet ties us to him through the certitude which he transmits us and we have it in common with him about God like a Master of everybody. In the last analyze we are watching, though, beyond the prophet, towards God Who is outside and above our human communion. Jesus ties us to Himself like to the ultimate centre. He gives us not only the certitude about God, but, for He places us in communion with Himself, He places us in communion with God.

In this way, the Revelation in Jesus is the same time salvation for, while the prophet is a man whom God puts to talk on His behalf, here He speaks Himself. The words constitute here the bridge of communion and, so, of power from Him towards people. The human words are no longer what separate God from people, but they are now what place God in connection with them.

The prophet, by showing God as the One Who tries to make His will known to the people and Who wants to take them, through faith, out from the sin's egotism,

in the communion of the love and of the confidence, but the prophet not accomplishing himself this communion with God, the prophet is a beginning asking for continuation, a promise asking for its fulfillment. The prophet is the forerunner of the entering of God Himself into communion with the people, in the only possible way, through embodiment. If we admit the prophet, if we recognize that God sought for speaking to the people through a human mouth, because of not being there any other possibility, in a necessary way we will have to admit also His descending amongst people in a role of a prophet. If we admit, over all, a divine Revelation through man, we will have to admit the embodiment of God, like a fulfillment of the Revelation, of its meaning; if we deny the embodiment of God, we will implicitly deny any Revelation through the mediation of the human subject. But by this, we deny the most profound basis of the confidence of the man in another man, of the referring of a man to another one. The “*me-to*” report is no longer built on the fundamental fact that only through it is communicated the certitude of faith from one to another. Without the Revelation through man, without a prophet, the human community shatters and, in general, it disappears from the world the certitude of God’s existence like a sustaining power of the society. If we deny the necessity and the meaning of the prophet, it does not appear anymore as necessary, neither even possible, the embodiment. Here stays one of the most powerful arguments for the divinity of the Old Testament, which some people would want to remove.

Only the Revelation through man it sanctifies and it founds the reports among people. Only by the fact that God makes the man an instrument of His unveiling to another man, giving the highest covering to this circulatory currency which the face of the man is, He grants to every man a high value in the eyes of the

fellow human. And this will of man's capitalization in front of his fellow human it is not fully accomplished but through the showing of God Himself like a human "you", bringing together into a unit, the human subject with the godlike subject, like a consummation of the idea of prophet.

We will stop now also on the character and on the content of the teaching which Jesus Christ has given like a prophet. Of course that that is not given for being used with a self-standing body of a doctrine, but like a continuously actual manifestation of the Son of God become man. It is not less true, though, that we cannot be indifferent to what Jesus Christ has said and to what He says. The fact that God has deigned to enter the communion of the direct dialogue with the man, it has an overwhelming importance. But this communion can't be considered like a frame which could be filled up with no matter what impartation of words. Between the fact of the direct and permanent dialogue between God and man, and the character and the content of the "teaching" communicated in his frame, there is a tight bond; we could say that the last is not but an explanation of the first one and of the basis and of the goals of it. We, though, couldn't have derived the teaching from the simple communion, if this wouldn't had, for example, the necessary time to explain itself.

That's why, it is of higher importance the preoccupation with the learning, but always in report with the communion which expresses it, and highlights it, and follows it, by being a teaching which serves, on this way, to life, to the living report between the listener and the one who imparts it. In His teaching, Jesus tells Who He is, Who has sent Him among people and, through this, He unveils the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the love of the Trinity towards the fallen man, the goal which the Son of God embodies for, namely

the salvation of the people, the way on which this salvation will be done, the word not doing anything else but to forerun and to translate the deed of love and His sacrifice. Furthermore, Christ's teaching comprises exhortations towards man not to reject the love from God, and appeals to enter the communion with Him through faith and love.

The whole His teaching can be considered, either like a supreme unveiling of God – in the limits allowed by the capacity of the earthly man –, or like a means towards the salvation of the man, for the unveiling has no any other goal but the salvation. The Revelation is the presenting of God in the work of salvation and the explanation of this work. The understanding of the teaching, like an understanding of the saving work of God, and, with this, of all the reasons of this work, which stay in His will and in His being, it has it in a sufficient degree only the one who is under the divine work itself, namely into the savior dialogue, in a factual report with God, Who reveals Himself to us by saving us, and Who saves us by revealing Himself to us. Who remains a simple spectator, by engaging only his reason in order to understand the teaching, he does not understand the essential, a lot of the issues seem absurd to him, and the ones which fit his reason, they still remain dead theories to him ¹⁴⁵. Only who lets himself to be totally kidnapped into the living report with God, only him understands this. That's why the Gospel says: "For they considered not the miracle of

¹⁴⁵ The poet Paul Valéry said once: "Si nous accusons nous jugeons, le fond n'est pas atteint" (*Variété* II, 135), and L. Binswanger (w. c. p. 111), from whom we are taking this word, continues: "Through this, he wants to say that there exists a new instance of which understanding is deeper than of the judgment or the condemnation. This instance can't be anything else but love, because only the love can touch the ground". "When the world judges upon the love and upon the one who loves, it judges falsely".

the loaves: for their heart was hardened.” (Mk. 6: 52). And, that’s why, Jesus predicts that His disciples will fully understand His teaching only when the Holy Ghost will descend upon them (Jn. 14: 26). Jesus didn’t come in order to give the mind a new doctrine, neither to respond all kind of questions of intellectual curiosity. He came in order to answer only one question, but this question is the greatest, the most fundamental one, the most tormenting one, for it is the question troubling not only the mind but the whole man, by permanently raising up from his depth, and not from the mental periphery. It is the question of the man: what can I do to be saved? And the answer of Jesus, which was not some theoretical answer, but it was a divine work, namely the showing of God, a work interpreted in teaching, it was not an urge to the learning of a doctrine, but to entering the report of love with God, to placing the man in a living relation with the savior work of Him. Jesus did not tell the young man who asked Him what to do for inheriting the eternal life: “Memorize well my doctrine”, but: “Love God from all your heart, from all your soul, and from all your breath, and your neighbor like yourself”.

This entering in report with God the Savior, it does not exclude the knowledge, but it barely means the true knowledge of God: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (Jn. 17: 3).

VIII. 2. The Revealing Power of the Human Word

The prophetic calling of Jesus it means the ministration of supreme unveiling of God, of His maximum closeness through the human word. The word’s means of confirmation have the secondary role of confirmation but not of interpretation. The Prophet

is a prophet, in the first place, through word. At Jesus, the objective elements which uphold the word, they are much more impressive than at other prophets, and that's why He is the prophet most confirmed by the objective criteria. But, mainly, the objective criteria are ordered, though, in the hierarchical ministration and in the kingly dignity. In each dignity, something else steps forward, in the foreground, in full light.

In the prophecy, the word has the main role.

Related to this, two aspects must be highlighted: a) the capacity of the human word to be an instrument for revealing, and b) the revealing force, entirely different of the prophetic word, which distinguishes it from the word of any other man and it shows it like having also in itself, not only in the adjacent criteria, a revealing power. And when we tell a revealing power, we tell, in the same time, a power producing of faith, because the full effectuation of the Revelation it is accomplished through the faith growing within man. Also, when we talk about the faith producing power, we talk about the soul shaping power, being known the relentless and the profound transformations which the faith produces within people.

The human word has indeed a great, a mysterious power. It diminishes or it makes massive realities disappearing, and it can create others. Sometimes, the worlds which it makes to disappear are real, and the ones which it creates are imaginary, but, for many times, the reality is the most proper meaning which the word creates. A good word, addressed in front of somebody, or through somebody else, it creates in him also real virtues which prolong his life or even save his life forever. The word brings people together or divides them, by decisively influencing the destiny of the social collectivity. If we have in our sight that, even the worlds which seem to be created by the world put in the service of the fantasy, are not created in a disinterested manner, only for their sake, but, into an

ultimate analyze, to be offered to others like a conception, like a more just norm of behavior, we realize that the function of the word does not stay in freely and theoretically revealing of mysteries¹⁴⁶, but the world expresses a pretention, an urge, a will to oblige, and it has a huge power to awake the obligation of the other, to determine him to go in a direction or in another. The word reveals in this way a subject, pretending and, almost regularly, accomplishing some determination of another subject. His revealing function is tightly braided with the ethic function, revealing an attitude and compelling to an attitude. Sometimes it unveils and it obliges to an attitude concerning a small question, some other times in one engaging the man fundamentally, towards the grounds of the existence themselves. Of this function does not make exception the word, which absolves the fellow human of a duty or of another, or of all of them. It is also this a urge, revealing a subject and an attitude and pretending or even accomplishing one similar into another subject. The worlds which are painted or which are banished away with a magical power of incantation, the arguments of an imposing stringent logics, they serve the goal of convincing the other, namely they reveals a subject who tries and, often, he succeeds to convince the other to inappropriate a similar thinking and attitude. Only by fact that there intervenes the word (the thought) of the second subject, it makes that the determination produced by the word of the first one to be diminished or modified. There doesn't exist a man who, by speaking or by writing, more widely or more concisely, to follow the simple disinterest of revealing his thoughts and not a gaining of the fellow human to what he sees and how he sees, on the basis of a dynamic attitude towards

¹⁴⁶ This idea stays at the basis of the entire philosophy of Lucian Blaga, which is deprived by any ethical obligation.

the world. It's self-evident that nobody would have spoken if there nobody had listened to him; nobody will use the word like a simple brush for painting his world, if he doesn't care whether somebody sees it. But the listening which he expects and supposes, like prior impulse of his word, it is not a passive listening, but it is an answer, whether is even a quiet one. And the wish is the answer to be an approval, and not a simple theoretical approval, but one which to become a determining force of the life of that one. The word has not a monologist character, but a dialogic one, and it has not the meaning of painting a static world, but it is the seed of the dynamism thrown into the souls of the people and into the social reports, it is the spiritual dough of the relentless historical movement. Its revealing function cannot be separated from the power and from the mission of determining people, from the tendency to increase or to modify the reality through the spirit of others. If it is like so, the word will imply a great responsibility for every man to use it according to its positive role, truly creative and not dissolvent, in order to urge through it the another, to help him grow up, to see and to start following the right path. Even the simple word, the not argued affirmation and the not adorned in attractive descriptions, it has a huge power of determination upon the people. Through a word you can place a border stone for the rebirth and for the salvation of a man, or you can push him to destruction. Through a word it can be awakened a whole nation to life. You never know how many people depend on the words you have uttered and on what measure. Apostle James resembled the tongue, worthily, to the helm of the ships, which, even small, it carries after itself so many burdens, or to the break of the horse, or to a spark which sets the forests in fire(Jas. 3: 3-9).

The word is the greatest power from the world, not because it paints static realities, but because it

determines the human wills, and it modifies the spiritual basis of the world. Through word it is shown the man subject, full of power over other people. The word builds and destroys in the spiritual order, so in the important one. If the human word has a power of creation, we could think in what a consummate sense is creator the godlike word.

The word is the greatest spiritual force of the highest created being. By word, every man disposes over the fellow humans, and he can make a good or an enormous bad. Every man, by having the word, and by being given the ethical function of the word, it is obvious the responsibility tied to this power. The word must be used only for building, not for dilapidation. Namely, only for awakening and for upholding within man the responsibility towards his fellow humans, of what constitutes his ethical being, a characteristic which is expressed even by the word. It is absurd to raise the word against itself or against its grounds.

In the creator force of the word, which the man has it at his disposition, it stays also the possibility to make a dangerous use of it. The man can create new realities through the word, but normal realities, the healthy ones, are only the ones according to the divine reality and will, namely the realities of love amongst people and of all the virtues which accompany unconditionally the love. Healthy realities are only the ones which the word creates by building the souls, by calling them to obligation and responsibility, namely, only the realities which the words creates while remaining into the frame of the destiny and of his ethical function. The word can also create abnormal realities, adverse to the true realities and inconsistent with the divine will. Either we call these abnormal, liar realities, or we call like this the descriptions and the arguments through which they are produced, the word, here, it does not stay only in the service of the

true, but also of the lie. The power of the lie to impose it comes from the power of the word to create any kind of realities. The word can create into man a state of enmity. The lie is real, but it is not the normal reality, that one according to the will of God, but it is an ill reality, a tormenting one, a reality suffering of some kind of gaps, a distorted reality, a false one, we could say.

The word of the man has decayed almost on all the line to this function of a servant of the lie, instead of serving the truth which it is tied through its sense with.

Only because the word has the function of revealing the own subject and of compelling the fellow human, we can understand why the word has been given to every man, for, through the word, each man is the teacher of another.

The words hasn't been given for the simple revealing of some words which would be unveiled to somebody or to some people, in a richer or in a less rich manner, especially, in report with others. If this had been the case, why this worlds would have been contradictory to one another? What would have there been so many contradictions amongst them for? Or, what all the people would have had the word for, while only some of them are able to reveal worlds of mysteries?

The word isn't given for a preponderant revealing function. The people have unveiled, actually, so few new things, which to be essentially new, since the very existence of the world. And, though, each man brings through the word a new revelation on the world, the most essential and the most determinant revelation in the circle of his fellow humans, being that of a new subject.

Each man has the word, for each one is justified and is called to revealing his subject and to awaken the responsibility of his fellow human to fulfill his duties,

which always are duties of the communion and of the concrete place and moment. Only because the word has as ultimate mission the ethical one, even if all the people are teachers to one another, there doesn't take place a bewilderment of minds, but all of them can grow up like ethical personalities, by fulfilling all their concrete duties to one another. Only in this way we understand the possibility of interweaving the role of teacher with the role of apprentice in each one's destiny, of the sovereignty upon the fellow human through the own word and of dependence on them through their word. Each man is called to urge his fellow human to fulfill his duty, imposed the concrete moment and to listen to that one's urge for fulfilling his own duty.

Given the less revealing and the more ethical character of the word, we live, as long as we are on earth, by faith and by coerciveness. The word reveals in a more full manner only the character of the subject who speaks to us, but neither this one totally direct and unveiled, but through an experience that doesn't excludes the faith. And the word reveals in a more full manner only the subject, because the subject is the factor who calls us to responsibility and in report with whom we need to behave ourselves like beings living by faith and by responsibility.

But, instead of serving the truth and the further building of the created world, through faith and responsibility, bringing the world to likeness to the divine reality, all the people have become liars, because of rejecting their faith in something else than in themselves, and they have rejected the responsibility too, by following to the father of the pride and of the lie. If all the people served the truth, there it would be harmony but, because they serve the lie, there it is chaos. This is for the truth is one, it is unity in harmonic multiplicity, while the counterfeiting has

countless possibilities.

The word has its power, however that power will be. But the word has the building power only when it serves to the true reality, only when it starts from the truth and it follows the truth. We could say that not into the word taken in itself it stays its building power, but into something which remains to be determined. But, because the function of the word it has an ethical character, starting from responsibility and wanting to wake up the obligation of the fellow human, following the communion and not the anarchy of the egotism, we can rather say that on the being of the word itself it depends to serve also to the building and to the truth, and that this mission is not different from the word. The word-lie is degeneration, it is distortion of the word, it is no longer a proper word. Otherwise, that something which distinguishes the proper word, the not degenerated word from the word-lie, from the destroyer of healthy reality word, it stays just in itself and this is not something else but the vibration of the responsibility, lie an attribute which gives firmness to the subject. The true word which is the word-truth and the subject like a form, a solid reality, by having this firmness from responsibility and, by being carried only by responsibility, they are a whole. The word-truth, is not anything else, but the inevitable respiration of the responsible subject. Where the word is degenerated, it is degenerated the whole subject himself, because of not nourishing himself anymore with the vital substance of the responsibility.

In fact, when is a word creating damages and when it has not building power, no matter how nice sound and how ethical would it sound? This is when the listener does not feel in the word the vibration of a steadfast responsibility, of a sincere and serious care for himself, or when he does not feel the covering by a firm subject, wholly crystallized into the said word and, thereby, into the care of the one who is saying the

word.

And, as damaging is the word in which is not vibrating the responsibility of the subject for his fellow human, but the careless will of the diabolic one to use the word like a tool on egotistic purposes or to drive him to his own destruction, as much damaging it is also the word-chatter in which is not felt any firmness of the subject and, so, it cannot exteriorize any serious calling, a not surpassing one, which to give birth to the personality of the fellow human.

The degeneration of the word, like a weakening of its power of creating true reality, like a perverting into lie and dissolvent miasma, it is the sign of the anticipate degeneration of the subject who speaks the word, of his decay to a state of inconsistent shadow. And firm is the man only when he lives into the obligation of the communion, when his fellow humans have the surety that they can believe in him in the whole future. The egotistic one, by having in his concern only his own interest, he does not engage with his future towards others. The egotism, the fickleness, and the lack of value of the word, they are found together. In this meaning, the devil is the most inconsistent creature. His word has no price at all.

However would stay factual the thing, the human word proves to be the greatest revealing power and, so, a creator of spiritual reality into the created world. Every man is, somehow, brought to the full reality or to the ruin through the word of the fellow human, which helps us to understand the affirmation of the Holy Scripture that the first man had to impart by the Word of the divine subject for not just be brought to the real realization, but even to be based like a possibility and like a beginning of a spiritual reality.

If the greatest revealing and formatting power on earth it is the human word, it is natural to God to use

it in His revelation and in the man's restoration. Also, given the indissolubility between the word and the human soul, it is granted that the Son of God, by making Himself a human subject, He has made a speaking human subject, by healing the subject in the same time with the word, by reestablishing the firmness of the subject and the power and the truth of the word.

b) Being given the decadence of the word in the mouth of the people, usually, the power, in fact, of the human word and the means through which this power is gained, they are shown in all their evidence only to the prophets. The word of the prophet has gravity and a power of penetration and determination towards good, like no other word of the man has. It is a word which burns like the fire, which cuts like the sword, which gets you out of commodity and numbness by throwing you in fear and anxiety, into the decision to follow him or in relentless enmity against the one who speaks that word. Most of the prophets ended being killed. The word has its power in the firmness of the subject, in his standing up and fixity, besides of what it confesses. Their word is truth, like truth is also the prophetic subject and it serves to founding of true reality amongst people and in their reports. The word of the prophet is flame of responsibility towards the fellow humans.

But, in the last analysis, the power of the word and the firmness of the prophetic subject, they come not out of the own will to report with responsibility towards the fellow humans, not even out of the own will to continuously report what God is saying, though also this will is an important factor, but from the certitude which he has about God. There doesn't exist any certitude of the human, and therefore firmness of his subject, without the certitude about God, which the man hasn't taken by himself. The firmness of the subject – and this is the heart itself of the subject – it is

a gift, which comes from above, together with the certitude about God.

The exterior word is not else but the fragmentary expression of the permanent interior word, which is the being of the human subject, like intentionality towards communion. The human subject is word created in the image of the godlike Word, Who is also a subject or intentionality towards communion into the bosom of the Trinitarian Godhead. This created word, debilitated and perverted by sin, it has a lack of influx of godlike power for regaining the consistency and the firmness. And the simple experience of the certitude about God, like a gift from above, it is sufficient to produce a straightening of the human subject and word.

The prophet is the one who has this experience through unmediated report with God. The word spoken by the prophet it is not a word directly spoken by God, but it had in it the divine influx, which reestablished the word in the whole its power. We could say that the subject of the prophet, like interior word and like exterior expression, he received a straightening from godlike word, the word creator of the human word.

The prophet reveals, through his powerful word, of responsibility and ethical penetration into listeners, like a most imposing and sure reality, his own subject. But, together with him and within him, the prophet shows God too, Who is present like power within the prophet. Here stays the miraculous force which the faith is transmitted with, from man to man, which is lightened the certitude from certitude with.

Given the degeneration of the human subjects and, thereby, the weakening of their word, it was necessary this intervention of the godlike word through prophets, in order to reestablish of the man.

But, through other intermediary subjects, it was not possible to effectuate a full revealing of the divine subject and a consummate reestablishing of the

human subject and of the power of the man's word. The prophet didn't do else but he awakened and upheld the expectations of the full unveiling of God. The divine subject must speak Himself, directly, in order to reveal His existence. He must speak in human words, on one hand, in order to be accessible to people, and on the other hand, for making Himself a human subject and for using the human word, in order to reestablish the firmness and the prestige of the human and the power of the word. The prophet showed the model of the true human subject, and, through the power of his deeply rummaging the people's obligation speech, the prophet determined to be born in the people the subject like a firm and solid reality.

The true word has a tremendous power of subject revealing. The word of Jesus overwhelmingly reveals the presence of the divine-human Subject within Him. But, through absolute confidence which He creates His listeners, those ones gain the certitude about everything He communicates them. His word is somehow transparent to the divine-human Subject of Jesus. But, besides this, into another manner, His word has the power of making the listeners to believe everything He communicates them besides showing of His Subject, for this Subject is lucent in the absolute worthiness to be believed.

The human word of Jesus it is somehow lucent to the godlike Word, the manifestation of his calling to ethical responsibility and to realization like a subject. The godlike Word has dressed in human word; the divine subject has taken the means of manifestation of the man.

His word is covered by the full reality of His Subject, which is the supreme reality, and which pretends and raises the man, also, at his true reality. The word of the man, when it stays in connection with God, it comprises in itself a part of the truth, and it accomplishes the truth, in its limited world. In the

human word of Jesus there is not reestablished only a part of the truth, but there is the Truth Himself, which is one with the godlike Word. The word of Jesus reestablishes all the humanity in the total truth, in full reality.

From the meaning of the word, highlighted in this exposure, it turns out that the truth in the created world it is not something given, which we have not something else to do but to contemplate it. The truth as full reality, a normal reality in the created spiritual word, it is to a large extent our mission, and we have to fulfill the truth through our word carried by faith and responsibility. The truth, like a reality given from ever, it is only at God, it is the inter-Trinitarian life of the godhead Persons. Our spiritual world is created by God only like grounds and possibilities. The bringing of the world to its full reality, to the whole truth, it is assigned by God to our responsibility. But, instead of continuing in this world the creation of the truth after the form of the eternal Truth, we rather entirely disfigured it in the contrary of the truth, into lie.

In Jesus Christ, the Truth or the divine Word has intervened into our world in order to reestablish it and to put it on the right rack of accomplishing. But He assigned though, to our will, to our word, the need to collaborate to the consummation of the spiritual reality created.

IX. THE HIERARCHICAL DIGNITY

IX. 1. The Consummate Sacrifice Which Dissolves the Sin from People

As high is the calling of teacher-prophet, like one which illuminates the people for salvation, in order to happily assuring of their eternal destiny, as high is also the mission of priest which serves to the same purpose.

The unsurpassed greatness of the priestly ministration it stays in the fact that it is mediation between people and God. If the prophet is the envoy of God towards people, for revealing His will to them and, through this, to give birth in them to the faith, the priest goes from bottom to top, from people towards God, with prayers and sacrifices for obtaining the forgiveness and the sanctification for the people. And the hierarch is the foremost from the priests¹⁴⁷. Through the priest, the man answers to the call God has made to him through the prophet. Only through both ministrations it is fulfilled the religious report between God and people. Through priest, especially, it is manifested and upheld God's inclination towards people.

From the being of the priestly service, like, otherwise, also through the one of prophet, it turns out that there is something impeding the people to get closer to God, like the priest does. That something is nothing else, but the sin, the impurity of the thought and of the soul. The sin is an impediment of subjective nature, making the man incapable to raise at God, Who is the consummate spiritual purity. God does not

¹⁴⁷ "(Hebr. 5: 1) For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins".

want to forcibly purify the man, because there is not about a physical impurity, but of a dirty inclination of the soul, is about a pettiness in all he thinks and feels. But this subjective incapacity reflects a subjective order set by God, Who does not admit the closeness to Himself of the impure soul in all his movement and reasons. The incapacity of the people to get closer to God, it is shown also by the fact that the priest, by being human, he does not dedicate by himself to the mediation service, neither is him destined by people to that service, but he is chosen by God Himself (Heb. 5: 4). So, the opposition which we have established between him and the prophet, the prophet being the envoy of God towards people, and the priest being the envoy of the people towards God, it is much attenuated, because also the priest is chosen and made worthy by God towards his service. Though, his job remains the one of representing the people, from God's benevolence. The priest is a sign of the godlike benevolence, like the prophet I too.

Here emerges immediately the question: how it is possible that God makes some of the people to be able to approach Him, and the most of the people not? This one can, and this one can't? The answer to this question is double. First: if is natural that God not to renounce to all connections with the people, the sole modality this connection to still maintained the distance, the principle of the impossibility of the sin to have communion with the purity, it is this connection to be established through a mediator chosen by God.

In the second place, these mediators in the Old Testament they were not sanctified in the sense of obtaining a personal moral purity, and their mediations and the sacrifices they brought, do not necessarily achieved for them the God's forgiveness and the reconciliation with God. The institution of priesthood, before Jesus Christ, it was only a means to maintain into the people the conscience of the sin

and of waiting for an effective mediator between the people and God, like the sacrifices which they brought before Him, by being testimonies of their sin, they have not the power to accomplish the reconciliation with God, because of not being real sacrifices, but an avoidance of the sacrifices, a replacement for surrogates of sacrifices. Though, for the Old Testament priesthood was established by God, and the priests were chosen by Him, it doesn't remain, in its existence and work, a simple imagination of the connection with God. This would be the case when the priesthood and the sacrifices from before Christ would be established by the longing and by the fantasy of the people. Because God is the one Who established the priest and the sacrifice of the Old Testament, but not like real means of conciliation, but only like pre-fantasies of it, the waiting for Messiah expressed through those ones, it is founded on the real promise of God, and the ones who regarded it with seriousness and who practiced the duties related to this institution, they proved confidence in the promise of God, having to receive, on the arrival of the true Savior, the reward of their faith, like the Epistle towards Jews tells us (chapter 11). The priesthood and the sacrifices of the Old Testament were pre-imaginings of the reality which was to come, but pre-imaginings established by God, like an earnest of His benevolence, like a mean to prepare the people – by the waiting which maintained into their hearth these symbols – for the receiving of the true Mediator. The people, having these symbols established from above, they knew that God has not forsaken them, but He has a plan with them and He prepares them for salvation. They were the objective signs of the benevolence of God and His promises towards people. The priest of the Old Testament had upon him the benevolence of God, and the sacrifices which he brought, they also had it. God was looking with interest to his existence and to the

sacrifice that he was bringing in the name of the people. This benevolence was not going up to descend the forgiveness over the ones who were bringing, through the priest, their sacrifices. They, though, were personally receiving the promise of the future salvation and this as was a big thing, being known that God never breaks a promise. If the report of the full communion with God, accomplished by Jesus Christ, it resembles to the wedding, the Old Testament will express the liaison of an engagement. The soul of the ones from under the old law was in the state of the fiancée, who received the promise of the marriage. He received something from God, but this something was not a present reality, but the certitude of the future gifts. The priest from before Jesus Christ was the objective general sign, but also the mediator of this distant liaison of engagement, of this promise given by God to the man, whose sacrifice the priest was bringing on a case-by-case basis.

Among the priests of the Old Testament, the highest one was the hierarch. While the priests were bringing sacrifices on each day, but only into the Holy, the hierarch was bringing on a single day of the year such a sacrifice and with the blood of the animal he was entering the Holy of Hollies, spreading the cover of the Ark of the Covenant for the atonement of the sins of the entire community of the people. It was the sacrifice from the reconciliation day, symbolizing the reconciliation of the entire people with God, a universal reconciliation. The hierarch was not exceeding, though, neither him the signification of the priesthood and of the sacrifices of the Old Testament. But, by the fact that he was bringing the sacrifice on a single day of the year and then he was entering the Holy of the Hollies, and this was a rule established by God, it was shown that not the number increases the value of the sacrifice, but a single sacrifice brings more than all the other sacrifices together, but that one sacrifice must be

of another kind than the ones of the animals, because neither the one brought by the hierarchy was accomplishing the reconciliation. The effective sacrifice will be a sole one for the entire humanity.

Jesus Christ is the true hierarchy, realizing, in fact, the reconciliation between man and God of whose promise and waiting was expressed through the priesthood of the Old Testament. Through the hierarchy of the Old Testament it was expressed and it was mediated the covenant of God, regarding the future fulfillments, at the future communion. Jesus Christ is the mediator of the actual union between God and man, of the done, unmediated covenant. The old covenant left the man by himself for then, under the reign of a law which he must fulfill in order to make himself worthy of the communion with God; the new covenant is the immediate descent of the God's love upon the man. The covenant, by being a convention between God and the people it is always a connection too. The old covenant was expressing a relation from distance, like between the master and the servant, a relation directed through commandments; the new covenant is the most intimate liaison, it is the report of perfect love between God and man; the new covenant is the most intimate liaison, it is the report of perfect love between God and man.

We said in the previous chapter that who does not admit the possibility of the prophet and his reality in the Old Testament, he cannot admit either Jesus Christ like a supreme prophet. Who does not admit that the priesthood is necessary and that the priesthood has its establishment from God, to that one it does not result like a necessity of the consummation of priesthood through Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ like supreme prophet and like a true hierarchy, He is in accordance to the prophecy and priesthood of the Old Testament. It is like a new aspect under which the divinity from the Old Testament is

shown to us and the divinity's indissoluble liaison with the New Testament. The priesthood, the sacrifice, and the covenant between God and people, they form a whole. The covenant, though it is established by the will of God, it must be inaugurated through blood brought from the part of the man by the priest who was chosen by God. "Neither the first covenant was celebrated without blood". Truly, Moses, after he told in front of all people, all the commandments of the law, by taking the blood of calves and goats, with water and red wool and hyssop, he sprinkled the book and the entire people, and he said: "(Heb. 9:20) This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you". The new law, also, it asked for its blood, because, at the last supper, Jesus: "(Mt. 26: 27) And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; (Mt. 26: 28) For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins". It is seen from here, that the liaison with God it cannot be established without sacrifice, because: "(Heb. 9: 22) (...) and without shedding of blood there is no remission".

The Epistle towards Hebrews, by considering that the two forms of sacrifice through which were established the two covenants, it declares that the new one, consequently also the Hierarch Who mediated it, it is superior to the old one and to its priesthood, respectively, for the reason that the sacrifice of the new one is a man, respectively the God-man, while the sacrifices of old one were animals. Then, because here the liaison between the priest and the sacrifice is so close than the sacrifice is the sacrificer Himself. The Hierarch brings himself like a sacrifice. The fact that the Holy Scripture attributes to the new covenant a superiority just because it is inaugurated through human blood and there is a full identity between the hierarch and the sacrifice, it gives us the key of the high meaning which the sacrifice has in report with

God. Partially, the same meaning is shown by the Old Testament too, but it is fully unveiled to us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Some theologians affirmed that, according to the testimony of the Holy Scripture, in the beginning, the sacrifice was not tied to the idea of the sin and it was not started out of the desire of obtaining God's mercy, but it was a simple homage brought to the Giver of all, a symbolizing of the idea that all the fruits of the earth belong to God. But, no matter how much it would have been joined this idea together with the practice of the sacrifice, we are seeing the idea of the sin and of expiation still as accompanying the second sacrifice about which we are told in the Holy Scripture: the sacrifice of Noah. "(Gen. 8: 2) And the LORD smelled a sweet savor; and the LORD said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake". In the first sacrifice of which the Scripture tells us, the one of Cain and Abel, it is not told anything about sin, but neither is the sin excluded. From the language of the text it is found, though, like a result of the sacrifice, the mercy of God, thereby the pre-existence of an upset for the human mistake. Through the Law of Moses it is powerfully highlighted the expiator role of the sacrifice. The man who was bringing an animal for sacrifice, he was bringing it for the cleansing of his sins, for gaining the God's mercy. He put his hands upon it to transmit his sins to that animal. The Pascal lamb was sacrificed for the first time for God in order not to kill the first born of every household and to escape the Jews from the slavery of Egypt. The Epistle to Hebrews, which gives us the most authentic interpretation of the sacrifices of the Old Testament, it persistently repeats that they were brought "for sins" (5: 1, 3; 9: 7; 10: 4 etc.), for cleansing, for forgiveness from the part of God, for reconciliation with Him, for obtaining His mercy, and therefore, instead of a sacrificing of the man himself. The fact that the goal of

the sacrifice it is the atonement of the human sins, it shows us that God wants the sacrifice of the man, and not of the animal. If it had remained permanently to the animals sacrifices for obtaining His mercy, it would have been accredited, though, the idea that God simply likes the smell of the blood, like some favorite nourishment, like the pagans believed about their idols. But they did not remain to these. Otherwise, even if it seemed more appropriate that God to pretend animal sacrifices than human sacrifice, only the human sacrifice shows the superior meaning of the institution of animal sacrifices and it accomplishes what was manifesting through that waiting. Not the animal sacrifice is appropriate to the just notion of God and to the motif which it is brought for, but the sacrifice of humans. Because the human sacrifice, though it reaches its culminant point through blood shedding, though it makes us thinking that not the blood in itself is what God pretends, but the sufferance and the complete auto-annulling of the man like a spiritual being, manifested through death. If the blood in itself had gained the benevolence of God, it wouldn't have been understandable why he would have preferred the human blood instead of the blood of the animal. If the blood in itself had described the path to God, it would have been unfounded the affirmation of the Scripture that the idea of sacrifice has found its accomplishing just into the sacrifice of a spiritual being, namely of Jesus Christ.

This way, if God wants the man to sacrifice himself, the sacrifice of an animal was a surrogate, was a substitution, but a minimal one and, thereby, an insufficient one, of the sacrifice of a human. Through the animal the man was giving something from his own, by harnessing his egotism, but God wants the man himself to completely annulling himself like a creature completely ruined by sin, which cannot be reestablished except through a creation anew, after a

true abolishing of the former man.

Because every man was compelled to bring animals for sacrifice, it is shown that everyone was, in fact, indebted to die, but they were avoiding it, with the approval of God, without the substitutive sacrifice of animals to bring them, in reality, the forgiveness of sins. In this way, the sacrifice of Jesus, which is in fact a sacrifice like God wants, as a human sacrifice, because it have made useful all the animal sacrifices, it shows its factual efficacy for all the people.

Let us insist, though, even more upon the question: why God wants a human sacrifice and not an animal sacrifice? We told that not for the better smell of the blood, but for the spiritual element, specifically human, manifested in the event of enduring a the violent death. Namely, not into the involuntary enduring of such a death, because the difference between animal and man it would not be integrally accomplished then, but in the voluntarily enduring of it. The question why God wants human sacrifice, it is specified like this: why God wants the sacrifice of the man like voluntarily assuming of the sufferance until the ultimate degree, which equals with the benevolent abolishment? Only for seeing the man suffering? The answer which the Scripture gives us here is: because of the man's sin. Thereby, for God to have mercy on man, and to forgive the man's sin, and to enter the connection with the man, He pretends the sufferance tied to his auto-annulling until the end. It is here a spiritual element which the animal sacrifice does not comprise. God wants the man completely surrender to Him.

The sacrifice aims to the removal of the sin, a spiritual remake, and it accomplishes this thing because it is the total renouncing of the man to himself and it is sufferance in the ultimate degree of intensity. The sin, by being a moral reality, it cannot be surpassed except by a moral reality too. The animal

doesn't do anything in this domain. The sufferance, like a sorrow until the ultimate surrender of the man to God, it is the sole spiritual way on which it is done the effective struggle against the sin like a hypertrophy of the ego, the sole force which can be opposed to the sin. Through nothing else it can be defeated the sin from inside, and the sin can be defeated only from inside, because it is a spiritual reality, a product of the liberty and, so, it can be surpassed only through liberty. Other methods cannot defeat the sin, except by destroying the sinner. The sin is a fetus of the liberty, but it has produced a burdening of the liberty, an inert gravitation of the man towards sin, a thickening of the entire spiritual life. The sufferance like a method of sin reduction it has, on one hand, a spiritual character and a bodily one, and on the other hand, it has a positive meaning and a negative meaning. The body suffers when the will searches to limit its inertia and the hypertrophy in lusts and passions, and the spirit, it suffer too, when the will fights the pride, the vanity, the hatred, and the egocentrism. Without this self-restraint combined with sufferance, the man cannot cohabit with his fellow human in a tolerance report, much less in communion, and neither can he recognize God.

It is so unpleasant to the human being to get rid of passions and it is so difficult to the spiritual laziness to stay strained into a constant effort of living according the will of God, and towards the good of the others. The will itself tires under the burden of the inertia and of the egotistic passions of the man.

From here it can seen that a sufferance with the pure negative meaning of limitation and restraint it's not enough. There must to be a positive sufferance, a huge one into the body and the soul of the man, without any visible and immediate connection with those passions, but interpreted like a means of atonement and of remaking the own being. We know the effect of the improvement produced upon man by a

heavy illness; even if he cannot bring it in an immediate closeness to some sins and to some bad inclinations of his. Many people are deeply influenced by a deadly danger which they have passed through. Everyone can illustrate through similar cases the ennobling power which heavy sufferings have exercised upon him.

Where are from, the power and this meaning of a sufferance of which immediate connection with the sin is not visible? If we observe, after the sufferance, a greater improvement of us, the sufferance will must have had a connection with the sin. Inside each of us, there exists an egotistic fund, a sin's residue, one more or less restraint in its manifestations. The sufferance communicates the power of melting this fund down. Over all, the effort of will we feel it like a larger opening of our subject towards the others' burdens, like a greater understanding of the fellow humans, like much more sensitiveness intuition to the almightiness of God in report with our shortage. The sufferance shows itself in this way, like being a force which melts the glaciers from around the ego, and which thins the walls of the egotism. The sufferance is the way towards communion; it is the way towards God like a supreme You of us, and towards our fellow human like a equal of us. **To whom God sends the sufferance, He gives him the power which opens the way towards Him.** The sufferance, by and large, it is the means of egotism reduction, of opening the moral horizon of the individual; the sufferance makes room for God in front of me, and to other human subjects too. "The sacrifice is the exit from the self, from his isolated selfishness, and it is my opening in front of you", says F. Ebner¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴⁸ "Das wort und die geistigen Realitäten", p. 180. „What sacrifices the man? All he considers into his isolated egoism and into the closing in front of the "you" like his one... The self must surrender everything is his, everything he grasped and wants to grasp when he says: mine, to me, on me. Only then he will live.

But this exit from the self it means the recognition of God, the self-limitation of the ego, and the putting of the ego at the disposition of God. And this is the sufferance. Into death it is expressed the bearing of this disposition of the limitation of the self, of obeying to God, to the very end. Where the man does not want to commit this act of entrance, through sufferance and death, into connection with God, he dies by not wanting it, because, without God, the created being cannot live. There the death is a punishment. Where, thereby, the sufferance and the death are accepted like a sacrifice, though they are a consequence of the sin, they escaped the man from sin. But a pure sacrifice and of universal value it cannot be brought by any man.

The stronger and deeper the egotistic fund is pierced into man, the greater is the necessary sufferance for melting it down. On one hand, into this sufferance it must breathe only the regret for the sin. Other liaison mustn't be with the sin. There must be a liaison of pure sufferance. The average man could not exceed the sin through his sufferance, like a sacrifice of his own person, for the reason that his being is so much rotten by sin, so that any sufferance which could be supported by him it cannot be deprived by a sinful element, by an impurity and, through no any other sufferance, even through the mortal agony, he could be able to wash it away. To his nature, there was no any other exist but either to be destroyed or to be stretched eternally into a sinful existence, namely into the hell which is not anything else but the vicious circle made by the mix of the sin and sufferance.

Even if before Jesus Christ there had been a man or another capable of a sufferance which - through its purity and intensity - to bring that man's being beyond

If, though, he wants of save his live itself, if he wants to affirm his existence through the words: my, to me, on me, no matter how spiritualized is their sense, he will be spiritually lost".

sin, he could have had this effect only for his own being. No matter how much would a man suffer, the maximum of his sufferance do not exceed the limits of his personal capacities, manifested also into sin. No man could suffer more than the equivalent of his sin, in the case in which the sufferance would form indeed a pure phase of his existence.

We aren't thinking here at a legal requirement established exteriorly, by God, like an impersonal scale that would require as much sufferance in this side of the balance to equilibrate the sin from the other hand of the balance. But we want to say that the sufferance of which would be capable even the pure man, it is a moral force too weak to be capable of melting down the huge pile of sins which fills up, over head and ears, the human genre in all the persons and in all their manifestations. It is, so, about a sufferance as power, like a spiritual intensity which to exercise victoriously upon the sin which overwhelms the human nature, under the form of moral inertia, pettiness, and egotism. Only because it is necessary a sufferance capable, through its intensity, to melt down in a spiritual way the bad fund of the man, it could be sustained that this report can be exteriorly expressed, also like a legal requirement. God, Who asks for the sins of the people a sufferance equal to the sins – at least from somebody else on behalf of the people – He asks for it because only into such a sufferance is it a power capable to melt all the sins down, because there exists an internal and direct report between sufferance and sin.

Of course, this order of things on the spiritual ethic plan was establish by God. And, because He established the mentioned internal report between sufferance and sin, He established also the equivalence between them like a legal expression. But this equivalence does not exist without that report.

But until now we have spoken more on the effect of

the sufferance of a man upon his own sin. Is there any effect of the foreign sufferance over our own sin? The sufferance of a person, out of love, for another person, it has upon that person, in fact, a beneficial effect. It is just the supreme beneficial force which exercises from man to man, because the love manifests here the fullest intensity. This influence is explained through some un-suffering impropriation of the sufferance of another person by the one for whom that person suffered. The most powerful influence upon her the son is exercised by his mother, who suffers for her son's transgressions: in case of the husband, the most powerful influence is exercised upon him by his wife who suffers. We have here an arrow towards the mysteries of the interweaving of the human destinies, of the interdependency and communication between them. The bodily separation from the surface between the human hypostases has accustomed us to not see their intimacy into depth, bases of the unity of the human nature and on love. The ethic structure itself, of the man, it is based on this possibility of substitution of a self through another one, into love. If I cannot help other person through my sufferance, if I cannot make that person better, what it will be given us for, this inclination of our being to suffer for that person? And what will remain from the ethic character of the man, if that man doesn't feel the impulse to suffer in the place of another, and if he feels the inutility of such a substitutive sufferance? But the influence from man to man, even when is exercised by the supreme force of the suffering love, it is extremely relative. We have said that the sufferance of a man, even if it reaches the ultimate intensity and purity, it won't be able melt down, in depth and in totality, the ground of the sin and of the sinful inclination from another person.

If the sufferance of a man for another man it proves to be powerless for radically healing him of the

gangrene of his sin, the beneficial influence which it exercises though, it shows us, in principle, the possibility of purification through a substitutive sufferance.

Out of the thing said above, it also comes out the conditions which have to be fulfilled by a subject in order his sufferance to have a universal substitutive power. That subject must be human, in order to feel the whole pain of the man for sin, in order to humanly suffer and to be into a connection of nature with people to communicate them the entire force which dissolves the sin. But that man must be pure and to be more than a man; he must be more than all the people, for the human pain which he bears to have intensity and a depth like it would have of all people together, if they would not be sinners. Only God can fulfill the last condition. This would be seen also in other considerations. The subject capable by a universal substitutive sufferance must be, in the same time, man and God.

Behold how it is explained why the sacrifice of Jesus was capable to establish the new report (the new covenant) between God and people, which was impossible to be done through the animal sacrifices. The man can enter the connection with God only through a reflux of his egotism, through a sacrifice. But a total sacrifice, a total exceeding of the egotism, a creation of the capacity of man for the full communion, it was realized only through Jesus Christ. As incomplete is the sacrifice from the Old Testament, in front of the one from the New Testament, as unconsummated must have been the connection between God and people based on the animal sacrifices, relating to the one established through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Through Jesus Christ, being truly accomplished the idea of priesthood and of sacrifice, it was realized also the consummate connection of the communion

between God and people.

In the one said above we have also the explanation why God didn't pretend human sacrifice before Jesus Christ: it would have been without any efficiency.

We have all the time, though, the duty to look at the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, not only like a power in direct connection with the man, but also under the aspect oriented towards God, namely under the aspect of expiatory sacrifice. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ it is the plenitude of the sacrifice not only for it is capable to melt down the whole fund of sin from within the human nature, but also for it is capable to obtain the forgiveness from God for all the people, without God asking from every man an equivalent sufferance for the sin from inside him.

But these two aspects of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ are closely related and interweaved. We have said that through the sufferance for sin, the subject opens his way towards God, by cutting off the obesity of the egotism that locks him up into self.

God has no interweaving with the sin. It is an order which He has placed it, depriving the egotist of tasting just the true joy of the existence. The sufferance, like repression of egocentrism, it is, in the same time, expiation for the sin in front of God. According to this fundamental order of the existence, any sin suffers, endures the godlike punishment. The godlike punishment is also the sufferance like path towards God. But it is a punishment through which God pulls us towards Himself.

How God it makes it possible to people, to be able to come close to Him through the sufferance of Jesus Christ? Every man must be purified when he comes close to God. If it doesn't take place within man the surpassing of the sin on a spiritual way, the man won't be able to come close to God. We cannot understand the sufferance of Jesus Christ like an equivalence, which, by being continuously in front of God, it allows

the people to have access to God, without being produced into these ones, from inside out, the surpassing of the sin. This mysterious thing we believe that it takes place thus: Jesus Christ, by being all the time in front of the Father, for the people, He remembers, He re-shows in front of the Father a sufferance which He has endured for the people with the efficacy which He is given by the divinity, but, in the same time, through the approach to man given Him by His human nature, so that He makes that this actualization to take place on every moment which a man or another turns himself towards God, an melting down of the sinful fund from him, opening to him a path towards the Father. A sufferance remembered by the One Who has endured it, or by somebody who looks at him, it is like a repeated sufferance. The representation of this sufferance of the Son, both in front of the Father from heavens, and also amongst people, through Eucharist, it removes the sin from within man through a spiritual influence, not a physical sufferance, but, in the same time, it is expiatory in front of the Father, because it produces the power which demolishes from the path of the man, respectively from the way towards God, all the obstacles. Somehow, the sufferance of Jesus Christ has descended into the respective man without that man to suffer himself, but by having within him the effects of an effective sufferance.

If into a man hasn't taken place the demolishing of the old creature, like through a fully personal sufferance, if it hasn't taken place within him a re-creator quake, through a seeing and not suffering assumption of the entire sufferance of Jesus Christ for world and for him, that man will remain like he was, with that fund of sin.

We remarked in the previous chapter that Jesus, while still being in quality as prophet, He produces within man the faith, namely the height of a subject,

and by this, especially, through the me-You communion which He establishes between people and Himself like God, through His words, He conveys not only the teaching, but also something from the saving godlike power.

Through this it is seen only that between the dignity as prophet of Jesus and the one as Hierarch, there wasn't a hiatus, but there was a passing from a less intensive area to one more intensive.

The salvation, into the full meaning, Jesus obtains it from God and He imparts us with it just through the hierarchical dignity.

We are looking here only at the imparted side of the salvation, that one of our awakening.

Jesus, by embodying Himself, He has come close to us, helping us experience God like a person in direct communion with us. The experience of a subject at the second person, it means, by and large, our claim, our raising on the ethical plan, into the state of a subject and of faith. In front of Jesus we feel ourselves claimed by the supreme You, by God.

But the force which we are penetrated through, in a decisive way, in a terrible way, by the claim of a subject at the second person, it is not his word, but his sacrifice. Your sacrifice is to me the most staggering word from you. It is raising me at the supreme ethical attitude, it imposes me the most intensive obligation, and it gets me out in the fullest way and in the most radical way, from the contemplative and egotist individualism in which I am towards things, and it puts me in serving relation towards the other.

We feel the power of the claim, our ethical situation in front of a soldier with his arms amputated due to the wounds he received during a war for our defense. One who would manifest his claim over us through a simple pretention over us, he is not touching us. We experience him like a subject, but he does not attract us into communion; we trying to evade, to gain back

our position of liberty and, if we can, of supremacy even upon him, so to reduce him to an object.

Only who does for us, without us to impose it him, so much than he shakes us, he succeeds to attract us into communion. And this is the goal of the claim.

God, by stepping Himself into arena in order to attract us into communion with Himself, namely to save us, He hasn't restrained Himself only to the word, like some Protestant theologians believe (Gogarten, *Ich glaube an den dreieinigen Gott*). The word has not the power to produce a definitive new state, to establish a faith unshaken by the ulterior happenings. Then, the word can produce more respect of fear and, even it vibrates by interest and intimacy, though it can prove a full love and, that is why, it cannot awaken a full love. Only the sacrifice of the speaker it fully confirms the love which he shows through word, only the sacrifice shows him unequivocal as renouncing to himself in order to create a communion and, so, only the sacrifice can awaken the true love in the other and it can attract into communion. The love, the sacrifice, and the communion, they belong together. The one is into another, like the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

And the sign that He has actually attracted us into communion, it consists of the fact that He has succeeded to detach us from the joining with the world, from the contemplative-exploiting-the-reality attitude, or even from ourselves. We are giving ourselves to whom has given Himself for us. We arise ourselves in the ethical supreme subordination of the sacrifice. And not only us, but the entire world, which we have submitted in the contemplative-exploiting attitude. Thus way we escape from sin through the sacrifice of Jesus, who makes to die within us the former man of the egotism, and to be embodied in all of us the ghost of sacrifice.

Dying to us, without ceasing to exist ourselves, but existing now for Jesus Christ, in communion with

Him, in the dual whole which has Him like a centre, we also share His situation in front of the Father. The higher form of existence, giver of happiness, it is not the one of isolated egotism, neither that of merger of the selves into a big divine whole, but into the dual unity, in which not any self lives for himself, but, being dead to his self, he lives for the other and into another.

This is the meaning of the words of the Holy Scripture on the necessity of our death in order to be able to live in Christ and for Christ.

The sacrifice of God succeeds to accomplish in the same time three things: to attract us into communion with Himself, by killing the egotistic man from inside us; to make us on this way to impart His fate of happiness and the communion with the Father, since we form a whole with Him; to fulfill the divine justice suffering for the whole of selves which the humanity forms together with Him, so His ghost of sacrifice becomes common to everybody. The order is, though, different. The last point occupies its place with the first one.

In the light of this mystery we understand better what we said before about the incapacity of a man, even being him totally pure, to perform a substitutive and expiatory sufferance. It was insufficient only a sufferance into history. Even Jesus, if He had suffered only into history, we wouldn't have understood how the power of His sufferance would have been communicated into any human soul from all times. He remembers this sufferance also in heavens, His sufferance becoming contemporary to each man who stays in the decisive moment of his eternal destiny. The sufferance from history has a big signification, but it doesn't explain everything. This sufferance had the role to place the sufferance of Jesus Christ into the ultimate intensity, having consequences with this intensity, later, in His being. He eternally bears the signs of the Cross, not only on His body but also in His

soul. He knows, He feels, He spiritually repeats the sufferance from Golgotha, for each man on his decisive moment, because He feels not sorry about it, and He doesn't renounce to the will to save everybody (Heb. 7: 25).

If a man, even being him totally pure, had suffered for his fellow humans, his sufferance wouldn't have had into history the intensity of the sufferance of Jesus Christ, and this deficiency would have been aggravated even more by the fact that it wouldn't have been capable to put the basis of an efficient sufferance either into heavens. Neither on earth, nor into heaven, a pure human being, would have been able of a sufferance capable to melt down the sin from the people and to expiate them in front of God.

IX. 2. The Sacrifice of Jesus – the Fulfillment of the Divine Justice

In the exposure up to now we have tried to show why God does not save the people without sacrifice, without sufferance, and especially without a sufferance equivalent to the whole fund of sin from the people. But, even if we have indicated that this sacrifice was brought according to an order placed by God at the basis of the moral order, though, because we have tried to throw more light upon the organic liaison between sufferance and sin, it is possible to have caused the impression that we haven't sufficiently highlighted the report between the sacrifice and the justice of God, but only with His love. That's why, it is necessary to stop ourselves in a more special way upon this point¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁹ The unilateral tendency to consider the salvation of the people like being accomplished like an exclusively subjective process, under the loving influence of Christ, it is represented at the Orthodox by Metropolitan Antony Hrapovitzchi, who, otherwise, deserves a particular consideration for the fact that

Anselm of Canterbury formulated the theory that the death of Jesus Christ satisfied the honor of God, which was offended by people through the hereditary

he highlighted the great reality and saving force of the substitutive sufferance. Antony explains the cleansing power of the substitutive sufferance through a too exaggerated unity between people, which, according to him, it has some sort of a common basis, a unitary *self*. G. Florovschi reproaches him the tendency towards psychologism and pietism. "He does not reach the objectivity; he does not reach the metaphysic perspective. In this concern, Metropolitan Antony gets astray from the tradition and from the patristic measure. He remains on a second plan. The problem does not stay in the simply replacing the «juridical conception» of the satisfaction for the principle of love, more appropriated to God. It must be understood a clarified the place of the salvation work onto the plan of divine economy, like it has been objectively accomplished" (Puti ruskago bogoslovia, Paris, 1937, p. 434). Antony went into his adversity towards the juridical theory so far, than he left into shadow the importance of the sacrifice on the cross, by putting the accent almost only on the spiritual torment from Gethsemane. "The spiritual torment and the bodily death of Christ, says Antony, were necessary, before all, in order all the believers to appreciate the power of His spiritual sufferance, like being incomparable more powerful than the bodily sufferance" (apud Florovschi w. c.). Our grossly nature cannot understand the spiritual pains. It is impressed much more by the bodily ones. That is why Jesus received the death on the cross. This was done only to impress us. Christ saves us through our obligation to the moral effort. Antony replaces the sacrifice and the divine grace through moral. All his conception is a moralism, though, on the other hand, he speaks about a deep unity of the *selves* and, so, about a passing of the purifying sufferance of Jesus into each man. He reaches to deny the ancestral sin and to some sort of Pelagianism. The will of the man is not evil but only proud. Through school and through moral effort, and through example – like is the example of Jesus – it can be straightened.

sin, on which, they, by not being able to satisfy, they had to suffer dying. Jesus, by being a man, He legally represented the people for satisfying the divine honor, but, by being God too, His death had the efficacy which could not have any death of a simple man. The wisdom of God, it has found this modality to wash His honor offended by people, but also to fulfill His love which He wanted the salvation of the people through.

This theory expresses, in fact, a truth when it regards the death of Jesus Christ not only like a manifestation of the divine love, but also like an act imposed by the justice of God. The mistake consists in the coloring of this fund with the nuances of the medieval mentality. God is shown like a medieval knight of whom relentless endeavor does not aim anything else but to obtaining the satisfaction for His offended honor. He is thought either like not having tranquility since His honor was touched by people, or like not being able to forgive them without receiving satisfaction for the offence He took. The honor of God is made dependent on people. In the work of salvation, God is preoccupied whether not exclusively with repairing His honor, in any case, He is preoccupied with it into a main degree. This sight of Anselm led, in the Protestant theology, to the theory of a vengeful God. Into the death of Jesus Christ God thirstily revenges against the human sin.

Just because God pursuits, primarily, the achieving of the satisfaction for His offended honor, or a full revenge – like the ordinary man cannot endure –, or because this is the exclusive condition on which it depends the salvation of the people, the death of Jesus Christ on the cross it is put into an exterior and juridical report with the sin and with the salvation of the people. Either it is believed like in Roman-Catholicism that the transgression of Adam didn't damage the human nature, but it only tensioned the report between God and man, on the basis of which

the death was hovering menacingly - like expression of the divine pride - over all people, or it is declared like in Protestantism, that the death of Jesus Christ for us it didn't bring any modification to our life while we are still on earth, but it brought to us only a forgiveness, though we remain sinners; the sacrifice of Jesus it is conceived like saving through a pure juridical effect of it: God reckons that His honor or His thirst of revenge has been satisfied, so the people are brought out from under the guilt without taking place any modification in the state of their nature. It is modified only His thought towards them (Protestantism) or it is removed the death conceived like a menace and like a factor which comes from exterior and not like a consummation of the interior ravages of the sin. Into such a conception the Logos has made Himself man only for legally representing the people in His death, and not to come, like God, close to people. Also, the preservation of His humanity after His resurrection it does not appear as necessary any longer.

The justice which had to be satisfied through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we believe that it doesn't imply, though, into its notion a personal ambition of God, but the care for a moral order which stays at the basis of the spiritual world. The fundamental moral law demands that the committing of the good to have an appropriate consequence for the respective subject, and the committing of the evil, as well too. It could be objected that the good deed is not done for reward, but it has the satisfaction into itself. And something analogue it could be said about the bad deed. But also in this way we can talk about a reward of the good and a punishment of the evil, understanding through them just the satisfaction comprised inside the good and the discontent comprised inside the evil. If this satisfaction or this discontent, they hadn't existed, the good or the evil themselves they would have become indifferent, because the reward and the punishment, by not

coming like artificial juxtapositions to the good or the evil done, but like organic consequences, like a prolongation of the good or of the evil done, they would have not been felt like precise different realities which would have done those good or bad deeds. The one whom the good or the evil had been done, he wouldn't have distinguished between these ones like distinct realities. If, though, you do not have any satisfaction or any joy for this committing, what are you going to distinguish through, the good from the evil, and what are you going to distinguish the one whom you do that, with the intention of that thing becoming within him too, such an impulse?

The moral conscience, in all its functions – like a commandment to do the good and to avoid the evil, like thank for the first one and like a reprimand for the second one –, the imagination about the chaos which would have been born if these moral differences had been blunted into the reports amongst people, it shows us that the moral order is upheld by this fundamental law of the reward of the good through good and of the evil through evil. This law is the one who distinguishes the good from the bad. The moral order stays, after all, in this distinction and in its supreme seriousness. The blunting of this distinction it would cause the same collapse into the spiritual sphere of the life, that the one which would be caused by shutting off the gravitation in the physical sphere. All the people tend towards this blunting. There must be somebody who to have the power and the will to reestablish the distinction, namely the prestige of the good in front of the evil.

God is endless love, say the ones who do not see in the death of Jesus also a fulfillment of the justice. His Being imposes Him to infinitely forgive. "This is His job: to forgive".

This kind of thinking introduces a dangerous relativism into the moral order. If the mission of the

man is to sin infinitely, and the mission of God is to forgive infinitely, if nowhere it is put the foot down against the human sin, what authority will God still have and what force will still stay in support of the good and of the moral order? In this case, not God is the Sovereign, but the man. God has no other choice but to continue walking on the tracks of the man for cleaning his mess. In this case, there doesn't exist a moral order which the man to feel above him and around him, but the man himself is his own law, if there can be any law.

It is said that the superior man forgives, so God must forgive all the more. But the people have to forgive one another, because no one is without sin, and no one can truly make himself a judge to the other¹⁵⁰. They can forgive, so that, because they have not the responsibility of keeping the moral order. In fact, we can also see amongst people that, immediately when is about the ones who represent and who take care of institutions, who take care of establishments based on a certain order, they cannot forgive anything and however, like the private individuals can, no matter how much they would want this in their personal quality. About the state, Paul the Apostle, says that it carries a sword for the punishment of the evil ones, and the state, in his way, is from God. But Jesus asks the individuals without public roles to forgive for seventy times seven.

God, though, He is the supreme preserver of the entire moral order.

But, insisting on the meaning of the forgiveness, we see that even the private individuals amongst themselves, they do not forgive one another without the guilty one manifesting some repentance. In order to forgive a man, that man must feel the need for

¹⁵⁰ **PAUL ALTHAUS:** *Das Kreuz Christi*, in *Mysterium Christi*, Furche- Verlag, Berlin, 1931, p. 245.

forgiveness, to see that he has mistaken, and to regret his mistake. You could forgive him before, but the forgiveness would be useless for him, if you do not make him to pass sometime through that spiritual movement of the self-overcoming of the mistake, which consists of remorse, of discontent with his deed, of realizing its gravity and the importance of the transgressed duty or of the unfulfilled one. He does not appreciate the importance of the forgiveness, he does not appropriate it in an intimate way, and he does not truly know it but when he realizes his mistake. The internal experience of the forgiveness he cannot have it before experiencing the gravity of his guilt and of the pain for it. **One cannot experience the forgiveness without suffering for his mistake.** In the connection of this two spiritual moment it is expressed another law of the moral order, which serves to sustaining prestige of the good, of the commandment to do the good.

You won't be able to elevate the man from the state which sin has thrown him into, if you do not make him pass through a phase of expiatory sufferance, if you do not help him pass through that sufferance¹⁵¹. Right on

¹⁵¹ The Catholic theologian Karl Adam writes: "The love of God it pervades towards the essential from within people and from things, towards the preservation, the ensuring, and the restoration of those original references and relations, which reign between Creator and creature, and from which it springs out the fullness of the life and of the power, and the joy, and the happiness. It is a saint love, one full of values, and one even creator of values. And where it meets the shortcoming and the sin, into the fallen man, where it reveals like a merciful love, a forgiving one, it is not an **empty forgiveness**, a simple passing overlooking and an ignoring of our guilt, but it is always a **creative forgiveness** too, namely a forgiveness which abolishes the infinite non- value, the conscious denial of the God's fundamental value, and the apostate idolatry of a created thing". (Jesus Christus, p. 321). The Anglican theologian R. C. Moberly says: "We know that if a man has

the moment which you want to forgive him, to call him back in communion with you, you must force him enter the oven of this painful purification. The sufferings, which are the natural consequences of the sin under the *first law* from the moral-ontological constitution of the spiritual world, through the benevolence of God these sufferings can serve, on the basis of a *second law* like means for overcoming the sinful state. For this is requested only to be borne voluntarily and interpreted by the one who endures them like welcomed on this purpose. In the first case, the sufferance is only a punishment, in the second one, it is both a punishment and a means of purification. The last sufferance is called expiatory. In the first case, the sufferance is a torment without any exit, a torment which moves endlessly into the vicious circle of the sinful state. In the second case, it is torment stretched towards the light of forgiveness and reconciliation, from which it falls while a ray still lasts on his darkness.

We have looked at the sin and at the punisher or expiatory sufferance, in report with the moral order, like being this connection owed to it. Through this it is highlighted that into the work of people's salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus, like a substitutive expiatory sufferance, God doesn't aim a personal satisfaction or a personal revenge, but only the preservation of the moral order. Though, we must not imagine a separation between the moral order and the personal existence of God. If that had been the case, God would have appeared like a servant of a law.

In order to enlighten us in this regard, we must

committed sin, it won't be enough, even if possible, to become again good and obedient. It must be done something in the direction of the abolishment of the past, without which the obedience would not be, in the true sense, really possible and which, of course, it cannot be express only into the terms of the present obedience" (Atonement and Personality, London, 1932, p. 116).

continue analyzing of the good and the evil done, and their consequences. The good is an interpersonal reality and thanks for it, also. In the same way are the evil and his consequence. To do the good it means not to conform yourself, into an isolated existence, to a law which imposes the good, but to do the good to somebody, to manifest your love towards somebody, to search for the communion of a fellow human, or to remain into that communion. And the satisfaction consequently to the good, it means the returning into your soul of the satisfaction that you have produced into the soul of your fellow human, it is the echo of the resonance that you have awakened into him, it is the joy of the disposition for communion with you, which you have produced in that one. Through good the man searches for communion, the reward is the news that he has found it, it is the answer of the fellow human. Through good you have wanted the awakening of the subject of your fellow human, the reward is the satisfaction produced in you by the signs that this awakening is taking place. Doing of the good is the call you address to another one for communion, the reward is the affirmative response of that one. If you feel a satisfaction for the good done to somebody, even when it has not produced any favorable answer from his part, this is due to the hope that your deed is noticed, if not by the man, at least by God and His approval is your satisfaction.

If you were dominated by the certitude that there is no personal conscience which your deed to produce satisfaction into, a satisfaction which to be directed towards you, the good would not have any power of attraction and it would not make any sense. In this way, the law which the good deed corresponds to, it is nothing else but the law of communion, the law of the relation between *me* and *you*. Good is what you do out of love for me, not what you do in conformity with an extra-personal law. This does not mean that the norm

of the good is according to the arbitrary of the second person. The norm of the good is according to what raises it to the true communion, to the exit from the egotism. I can do good deeds, which not to be pleasant to my fellow human, now, or never, because he does not understand their value or use for his real benefit. From this point of view it can be said that the law of the good is above persons. But, because the good is the normal manifestation of the person and it aims the person's accomplishing into the fellow human, and the true person is given only like a pole of communion, it can be said that the norm of the good it coincides to the law of the communion, to what suits you, in your quality as true person. But, in the state of sin which the people are into, none of them is able to want what matches him, none of them can be a precise norm of good. The good orients according the law of the communion, which, even if is what truly suits the true happiness of the persons, it is above their arbitrary. The communion cannot be accomplished according to the arbitrary of two persons, but according to a law. In this way, we understand how God, the One without sin, Who meets in a full way the character of a person consummate into communion, He is the norm of the good for all the ones who want to do the good. His satisfaction is the criteria of the good that we have done, His command, it is the criteria of the good which we are going to do. The good, and with it the moral law, are nothing else but the will of God, and this is the voluntarily expression of His tri-personal being. Into good, the God's will meets the indication of His being. The norm of the good has a personal character, but not an arbitrary one, and, in this way, it still is a law. When we are doing the good, we are not accomplishing a impersonal law, but we are providing satisfaction to God, we are producing Him personally "a satisfaction", showing us capable of communion with Him. God has a satisfaction due to the good that we are doing, but

not a satisfaction which comes out of an ambition, or out of a vanity, but one of a superior order, because we become worthy of the communion which He wants. It is a joy resembling to the one which is produced us by our child when we saw that he understand us and, by this, he grows up to the capacity of communion with us.

To be bad and to do the evil are again a state of interpersonal relation. It is the noncompliance not with an impersonal law, but with what fits to other persons and, in the last analyze, to what fits God, not in an arbitrary way, but according to the indication of His being. To be bad and to do the evil it means to have not love towards the other, to not see the other one, to not promote through your love the growth of his subject, it means to see and to be preoccupied only with yourself, and not to search for the true communion.

Even if we understand more easily the connection between the good we are doing and our spiritual growth like reward, according to the satisfaction which comes to us from the other, it is very hard to understand the enormous consequences of the egotistic obduracy, and of the spiritual diminishing, which are caused within us after our evil deeds. The effects appear to us disproportionately big in report with the deeds. But everything happens on the basis of a constant law, an iron law. If in the case of the good we feel our growth like an effect of the satisfaction which is projected upon us from another one, when we have done the evil we do not feel the diminishing like an effect of the dissatisfaction of the other, but it is like taking place by itself. It is, in the case of the evil done, rather the lack of love from the part of the others what causes the torment and the spiritual distortion in us, than the reflex of dissatisfaction for that one. In the consequences of the evil, like an intensification of it, like a punishment of it, we experience the abnormality of the state of non-communion, the torment of the

existence deprived of the love of our fellow humans. It is also a relational state, but a negative one. The torment comes to us from our referring to others and from ascertaining that we do not find at them the love we need. We are not punished by a law, but by the fellow human, and not so much positively, but rather negatively, through the fact that he has no satisfaction anymore on us; he finds us no longer worthy of communion. The personal growth which we feel when we enjoy the love of the other one, and the diminishing we feel when we no longer enjoy his attention, it is a hint that through the other one it comes to us a plus of being, that the love means a placing of us closer to the core of the existence, to its centre¹⁵², and the egotism is an our exit to the outskirts of the existence... In this way is explained why the sacrifice, like an exceeding of the egotism, instead of being felt like a weakening of our existence, it is experienced like a way to enrichment. Thereby, the ethic is into an indissoluble unity with the ontological. More being it means more love, and more good.

That is why, it is not necessary that somebody to hate you, in order you to feel yourself as being diminished, and it is enough that somebody no longer pays you attention. Of the lack of love of our fellow human we still can comfort ourselves, because he can be wrong in what concerns our deeds. But the absence of God, the lack of the approvingly echo from Him for our deeds, it is an awful torment, it is a frightening punishment. Either this punishment is due to the lack of attention which the divine person pays us because we are not doing what He wants, or it is due to a positive influx of dissatisfaction of His, which we are not felling clearly, the connection between the evil we are doing and the following torments it is produced with a power of a law and this law stays into the

¹⁵² **L. Binswager**, w. c. p. 197, 198, 200.

positive or negative personal attitude of God. In the punishment of the law it is not about an extra-divine, but about God Himself, not into an arbitrary attitude, but into a one, which, like in the case of the good that we are doing, it meets the will with the indication of His being.

The law of the birth of the punishments from the done evil, it is wanted by God, but it is nothing but the expression of the sole possible way of existence of the created beings, which refuse the communion with God for which they were created. If the man was created for communion and it was created like that because God Himself lives into communion, it will be easily understood that the refusal of the communion it causes in the man's being the state of abnormality, of dissatisfaction, of torment. And into communion God doesn't want to keep him forcedly. The communion is accomplished only when each person voluntarily sees the other person and live for that person. God could forcedly impose Himself to the human sight, overwhelmingly. But this had not been a communion, because the man would have felt himself as annulled in report with God. God presents Himself to us in a discrete way, while we are on earth, in order to rather be found by us together with the whole importance of His being. Before arriving to the face-to-face report with God, we must grow up in conditions which not to annul, from the start, the entire our daring. If we do not force ourselves to find God, to take not of His presence, we cannot raise up to the state of communion with Him, and we do not feel either the satisfaction which makes us to spiritually grow up.

In order to be able to enter the report of communion with God, we must earn His forgiveness. But our capacity to impropriate His forgiveness it is not shown except in the same time with the capacity to endure the punishment like expiation. We will see that, in fact, Jesus is the one Who expiates for us. We only

participate, in a secondary way, to His expiation. But we still are capable at least of a mediated, participated expiation. Though, we do not expiate by conforming ourselves to a law which stands by itself, but we expiate with our face towards God, by looking for His face. We are suffering in this case in order to realize the importance of the divine Person Whom we have disregarded. Only in this way we still can make Him grow up in front of us. Only in this way we cut off our egotism which has closed up the horizon towards God. We must give a satisfaction to the divine Person; this is the same with Him growing up in front of us and with our growth at the capacity of communion with Him.

Not God need this satisfaction, but we need to give this satisfaction to God. On this one it depends our spiritual life. To Him this is a satisfaction He doesn't absolutely need in order to be happy. It is a satisfaction in the sense of a joy which we produce Him, a joy that we become able to taste the happiness of the communion with Him. The divine authority was offended by our pride and egotism. It is a law that we cannot enter the communion with Him until we do not reestablish in our eyes His prestige. And this cannot be accomplished only through that that we have not paid Him before the due respect, and now we are paying it.

Besides the fact that we wouldn't have been capable of such a change of us without sufferance, the God's prestige in our eyes would have not be restored if we hadn't paid, with sufferance, the lack of care and the mutiny which we have made ourselves guilty of. Without any regret we didn't realize the huge mistake which we have done and, so, neither the importance of the God's Person. But the sorrow cannot be a frail theatrical sentiment, but an ontological radical pain, a burning of our entire being, which until now has made himself guilty and he bears in its guts the stamp of the mutiny against the authority of God. We must

feel God revenged in defeating, from the ground up, our sinful being. Only this way, we still are capable to feel reestablished the whole His divine authority.

The law of the impossibility to escape the sin, other than by satisfying the divine honor, we feel it, thereby, like a concrete law in our intimacy, not like an abstract formula. So, even if the terms of honor and satisfaction, of Anselm's theory, they can be used, there must be specified their meaning into a way adequate to the divine being.

When we say that God doesn't save us but only if we will satisfy His honor, we do not imagine that God is driven by the inferior sentiment of those people who cannot sleep until their honor is reestablished or until they had their revenge. The honor of God too little depends on our attitude towards Him. And it is incompatible to attribute Him a "thirsty" of revenge.

It is necessary to us to realize His importance, His authority; due to a basic law – which is the law of communion – it cannot be reestablished without giving this satisfaction to God, without seeing God revenged for the offense we have brought Him. Of course, God does not remain impassible to our attitude. He rejoices if it is given Him our part of satisfaction, and He wants this, but on the other hand, He becomes sad if that satisfaction it is not given Him. But the joy and the sadness are for us, and not for Him. He is happy for Him and He is sad for us: beholds another mystery of the divine life, which we are forced to express in a form of an antinomy.

So, the satisfaction brought to God, as payment for our sins, it is not a simple subjective process in the work of the salvation.

When God sees that we have entered the phase of the voluntarily sufferance, which has an expiatory character, He has a joy, because He knows that this sufferance brings us towards Him. Instead, about the sufferance under which we groan revolted, by

multiplying our sin, He has not any joy. Of our expiatory sufferance He has a satisfaction, not an egotistic one, but a satisfaction of the parent who sees his son under the endeavor about he knows that it will bring his son on the right path. Because God knows that the absence of these sufferings for a long time, eventually even for the whole earthly life, it will make the man incapable of being saved, so that He also has a positive role in bringing these sufferings.

In the theory of Anselm, the God's love, which He wanted to escape us through, from death and from His justice, which opposed to a forgiveness for free, the sufferings are shown like being opposite and it is necessary a great power of inventiveness to possibly be reconciled.

But if the internal shaking of the man through his own sufferance or through the sufferance of another, it is necessary just for, by being reestablished in his eyes the prestige of the divine authority, to be possible for him to restore himself from the ground up, God asking for the expiation of the sin, He does nothing else but to pursuit the true restoration and salvation of the man which is desired by His love. Just the love of God, Who wants the man really elevated from the state of relaxation of his moral springs, it imposes the sufferance and the sacrifice. In this way, the love and the justice no longer appear so opposite. The justice is only a modality of work of the divine love. The love, understood in a wider sense, of wanting of the real good for the others, it comprises also the justice like a method for their true restoration. In this sense, the opinion of some Eastern Holy Fathers, who deduced the embodiment and the sacrifice of the Savior only out of God's love, without speaking about His justice, it is profoundly true¹⁵³. Also, the idea of the other ones that

¹⁵³ **L. BINSWANGNER**, w. c. p. 592-3, insists on the fact that the order of love it does not remove the order of the justice, but

the Son of God has embodied to save the man from the power of death and of the evil, because this saving was impossible without an internal shaking of the man

it integrates it to itself, like a subordinated element, like the soul does not remove the body, but he raises the body into his order, by subordinating the body to himself. He gives the example of the attitude that we can adopt towards the conflict between an owner and the thief caught in his garden, whom the owner starts beating. It is here a meeting of tendencies, of forces, and of ideas, which gives the phenomenon of the **punishment**. We **cannot** adopt a negative attitude about it, because the social order could not be otherwise maintained. But, in the same time, we can approach more intimately these two fellow humans, who are in conflict, and to feel love both for one and for the other, without ceasing to justify the owner who defends his property by punishing the thief, and without ceasing to disapprove the thief for his theft. When we are looking at these two fellow humans only through the light of the justice, we are far from them, and we have in our sight not their intimacy, but the general order and their deed in report with it. When we are looking at them through the light of the love, we have got so close to their intimacy, then we feel that we are participating at everything hurts each of them. ("Dann bin ich in liebender Imagination sowohl der Bauer als der Knabe, tue, leide, über darüberstehende Subjekt, Sonden als von der betreffenden Handlung an diesem bestimmten Spiel des Daseins mit ergriffenen Glied liebender Wirrheit", p. 577). God, in His quality of founder and preserver of the moral order, He looks at the people through the perspective of the justice. But, by coming closer to them, through the embodiment like man, He feels solidarity with their misery, arching His love over the attitude of a keeper of justice. Through the fact that He makes Himself man, becoming one of the *selves* in which He implements the same nature (Sein), through the report of love which He enters with the people in, by making to pass from Him to them and from them to Him the flux of the existence. He voluntarily assumes their guilt and He conveys them His justice after resurrection. Like a righteous God, He is the one who punishes, but like a Loving God, the one who puts Himself in the place of people, by making Himself man and by waiting for His punishment.

consequently the expiator sacrifice of Jesus Christ, it is also true.

We said that the expiatory sufferance is the voluntarily endured punishment, without any spirit of reproach against God, like a consummated homage brought to Him; namely, the sufferance endured in full cleanliness. It is the clean sacrifice (Heb. 9: 14), the only one which God wants. The people, though, they couldn't bring themselves such a clean sacrifice. Each of their sufferance was carrying the seal of the sin from within their beings, increasing it. The sufferance to death, including the death, it was a satisfying-suffering¹⁵⁴, not by being a satisfaction, but by being a punishment prolonged into eternity, and not a redemptive one¹⁵⁵.

¹⁵⁴ Academician PhD. Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae was a rhetoric genius, who created new words all the time. In this case he put together the word *satisfaction* with the word *suffering*, in order to express his idea in the best possible way. (translator's note).

¹⁵⁵ The Anglican theologian R. C. Moberly, in his famous book entitled "*Atonement and Personality*", he writes: "The idea of effective expiation for the sin it equally asks for a perfect repentance and for a perfect power of sanctification. The man has sinned. The man is no more righteous. If I am unrighteous, what will be able to make me to be absolutely righteous? If my repentance – referring to the past – have been be truly perfect, this would have meant that my person would have been still absolutely one with the Justice in the condemnation of the sin into me and on my account. Such a re-identification to the justice, if it have been possible, it would have been a real contradiction with my past... In report with the past, with the present, and with the future, I would have had to become perfect and continuous and godlike by right" (P. 110). Into the man, though, there cannot be found these two contradictory states: the repentance for the sin and the purity. Only in Jesus they interweaved, for He was both Judge of the sin and God, like the One Who never has sinned, but He was also an Expiator of the sin, like a man who has taken the sin upon

It was needed a man who not to be a sinner, for his sacrifice to be clean. Such a man, though, if he had been born out of the natural enchaining of the generations, he would have had to arrive to the state of purity through a clean sacrifice, which he couldn't have been brought, because of being a sinner. And if he had been created by God in purity, his sacrifice wouldn't have redeemed but, maybe, the offense of a single man.

Is was needed a man untouched by sin, of whose clean sacrifice to give God satisfaction for the unrighteousness of all the people, for He was disregarded by everybody. The solidarity and the community of nature between people make that every individual bears the sinfulness of the entire humanity. Thereby, even for the salvation of a single man, it was needed a sufferance which to expiate the extent of the sin which burdened the humanity. The authority of God couldn't to be satisfied by a smaller sacrifice or sufferance, as much as this authority was disregarded by a man or by some people. The ransom was needed in order to be brought on behalf of the whole mankind, or it was brought for nobody. There was no any other possibility. To suffer the equivalent to the sin from a single man, to give satisfaction for the sin from a single man, it means to suffer and to give satisfaction for the sin of the entire mankind.

Who doesn't feel the chocking and the overwhelming which sometimes the dominion of the evil actualizes with, upon him, or into the almost permanent blemish

Himself, by self-condemning Himself. He condemned the sin, but He made Himself as sin. "He, the eternal Justice, by judging the sin, He judged it not into another person, but He judged like a penitent is judged, in Himself; He brought Himself in front of the judgment which He pronounced; He stays in the role not of a simple judge, nor of a simple victim, but of a voluntary penitent, identified to the justice of God in His own sacrifice" (p. 110).

which flows his life of thoughts, words and acts in, and that there is no bigger evil than the one which can start from his individual hypostasis, or that this hypostasis is the instrument or the environment of manifestation of a power of the evil greater than his spiritual power? Here it is the sin which resides in a nature which everybody possesses, in solidarity with all the people. The own sinful deed adds a personal index, but the overwhelming fund is the common sin, called hereditary. Through each man, not only that human individual offends God, but He is offended by the entire mankind. This happened also through the Adam's sin. His mutiny was an act of personal will, but its first birth has produced a sinful force which exceeded a personal will, by infecting the human nature's entire extent, which is no longer of a single person. This universal-human effect of an act of personal will, it cannot be understood otherwise than as not being an act created the general-human force of the sin, but it stood at the door, like an extra-human force, which the act of personal will just opened the gates to, in order to invade inside. The will of the first man played a decisive role, but not because he had the power to create the sinfulness of the whole mankind, but because, by staying under the pressure of a superhuman force, and by being possible to surrender or to resist, he yielded himself and, through this, he gave the way inside to, into the human nature's content. The voluntarily sinful acts of the other people do not bring an effective multiplication of the mankind's sinful background, so they have not a decisive role like that of the first man.

The ocean of evil circulates freely into the content of the human nature, due to the breach caused by the yielding of the first man. Revealing to each human person it is not the sum of sins of the forefathers, but the background of sins which has dwelt into the general-human nature through the

transgression of the first man, and which manifests through the sinful acts of everybody. This extra-human force, which pressed tempting over the will of the first man and which, through the first yielding, it has dwelt and it moves into the entire human nature, by being more powerful than the whole the human will together, it must be borne by a hypostasis on the measure of the supra-human intensity of the evil which spreads it. It happens us often to feel the generous and confident impulses of the soul, broken by an unseen influence, later identified into a person who stalks us from shadow, with enmity, with hate, and with envy. The influence in good and in bad it is conveyed from distance, not only through eyes and speech, but also through the concentrated thought, through the simple presence, more or less hidden to the bodily sight. In fact, we feel the force of the evil in each of us, like it could not come, in final analyze, from the human nature, which wants so much the good, but from a foreign source and as having a more powerful intensity than the human nature can give to it. The irrational sinful will, against all the argument and all the evidences which plead within us in favor of for the good, it cannot be explained otherwise but like coming from a foreign abyss, from reasons which are foreign to us, which we cannot understand, which are not ours.

Thus, we feel that in every man manifest not only a background of sin of the entire mankind, but also a force more powerful than the whole mankind together. The hereditary sin which agitates itself in each man, it is not only a common sin to all the people, but it must be conceived like an intersection of the evil spirit with the human nature. He is the expression of a communion with the evil spirit, with a personal hypostasis opposed to God and more powerful than all the people together. Through everybody's sin of man God is offended not only by the entire mankind, but also by the evil supra-human Spirit. Every man

accumulates in his sinful deed everything that revolts against God. Of course, of a big part from this evil, the man is not guilty, being produced through his will, yet with a force above his will. From here it turns out the possibility for the man to be saved. Which cannot be the case with the evil spirit, which is himself the voluntarily source of the entire evil.

It is true, objectively, that the offense brought to God, through everybody's sin, it means the offense brought by the whole mankind, including through the sin of the evil spirit. Thereby, the satisfaction which must be given to God it must be equivalent to this panhuman and more than human offense. Here is not about a satisfaction brought to God for the direct mutiny of the evil spirit. This one cannot be restored and so, redeemed. But here is about a satisfaction for the past work of the evil spirit, assumed through the will of the man, in a certain regard, against the man's will. It is a satisfaction for the sin which the man is responsible for, and which aims to get the man out from under the guilt. Through the man's will was manifested the work of the evil spirit, but, on one hand, not entirely, and on the other hand, the man's will acted by yielding under the pressure of a huge force.

The evil manifested through the man's will it is more intense than the one which the man would have been capable of doing and the restoration of his divine majesty must be equivalent to the whole this objective evil, but the man, thought, he can be saved, because of this giant evil, although impropriated and done through his will, it is not due only to him. The man must see the authority of God reestablished in report with the entire offence which was brought to God, even if this is not exclusively the product of his will, and the nature must be purified. It is needed a sufferance which to be able to remove, from the entire human nature, a supra-human evil; it is needed a sufferance

which to defeat the satanic evil, by expelling him from the human nature and by restoring the good in the human nature.

The salvation of people cannot be accomplished without to be crushed the power of the evil spirit. "(1 Jn. 3: 8) He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil". Jesus answers the seventy disciples, when they announce Him that even the demons obey them, in His name: "(Lk. 10: 18) And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven". Another time He brings in close connection His passion, the glorification of the Father, and the victory upon the Satan: "(Jn. 12: 27- 33) Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said: An angel spoke to Him. Jesus answered and said: This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me" and immediately follows the commentary of the Bible: "This He said, signifying what death He should die".

Jesus being a clean man, but, in the same time, more than all the people together and even more than the supra-human hypostasis bearer of the evil, He was able to bring an expiatory sacrifice for the reestablishment of the divine majesty. Because no man is able to expiate for his sin, the salvation cannot be obtained but through substitutive sacrifice of a clean man, capable of a sufferance equivalent to the sin of the entire humanity, which is, in the same time, supra-human in size. Jesus was fulfilling the condition of

such a being. It remains, though, to be elucidated, more purposefully, the following question: How could He suffer on behalf of the other and especially, how it was possible to establish a more intimate connection between His sufferance and the universal-human sin? This is necessary because of, without such a connection, it is hard to understand the expiatory and substitutive character of His sufferance. How could Jesus, namely, to feel, to live like expiation, like a punishment, His sufferance? If His sufferance was the antidote, the reward for the general-human sin, it had to be produced such a connection between them. If there hadn't existed such a connection, neither the Father would have considered His sufferance like a satisfaction for the sin of the people. The answer to this question would help us understanding how His sufferance could replace our sufferance.

IX. 3. Jesus Christ – the Lamb Who Bears the Sins of the World

The sufferance of the one for another it is shown for many times by the reports amongst people, and these reports also indicate the possibility of a assuming the sin of the fellow human together with the sufferance for him. A mother suffers for the villainous deeds of her son, like she would have done those deeds and she is capable of receiving any punishment on her son's behalf. The bigger the loving closeness between two people it, the bigger is the capacity of assuming the sin of for one another¹⁵⁶. Jesus, by taking upon Him the

¹⁵⁶ **R. C. MOBERLY**, *Atonement and Personality*, p. 118: "The law of the sufferance or of the substitutive energy, like a principle which circulates all over in the human life, it is not suspended when we step into the region of the conscience of the sin. Others suffer and are sad in fact in favor of their

human sin, He shows that He has come in the maximum closeness to the people; He has come closer than the best brother, or than the most loving mother. In order to make Himself our Hierarchal towards God, it was insufficient a juridical assumption of the form of man, but He had to come close to us in the supreme intimacy. The prophet, like the one who comes in the closeness of the second person and who speaks to us directly out of love, and the hierarchal, right the one who, from the same love, he suffers for our sins even to death, they complete each other also under this report, the first one searching the fulfillment into the last one, and this one supposing the first one.

Three are the problems comprised in this mysterious assuming of the human sin, done by Jesus Christ: a) how was He bearing, being sinless, the sin of the world? b) of what nature was the passing of the sin from people, to Him? and c) how He declared His agreement with Father, in order the righteous one to suffer for the unrighteous ones, to be spared of punishment the ones who sinned, and to be punished instead of them, the innocent one? Have we to deal here with a juridical trick?

convicted fellows and not only with them, but deeper and sharper than they can do it. Not only is the sufferance in their life, but also there is the shame in their heart, proportionally, maybe, with the shameless of those ones and with their love. There is even more. This shame, as product of their closeness and love, it is the most powerful element of our hope for the ones who have sinned. If they are beings close to us and dear to us, who with the immaculate purity of their heart and with their confident love, they tirelessly place themselves under the burden of the shame of the ones who have sin, thanks goodness, I will sense that, into the atmosphere of this substitutive penitence which shrouds the ones who have sinned and sneak, almost imperceptibly, like respiration of their love in their life and in their soul, that there is something which makes you daring and to warrant the certitude of their future salvation”.

Professor Sergei Bulgakov writes: "Jesus not only suffers from the part of the sins of the world, upraised against Him, but He impropriates them inside «through the compassionate love» (Metropolitan Antony) and, by making them as His own, He identifies His sinless human nature to the sinful nature of the old Adam. He, the light of the World, He deepens Himself into the darkness of the sin, in the night of Gethsemane of the sufferance for the sin. This identification is a voluntarily act of the God-the Man, by virtue of which He becomes the Lamb of God, which bears the sin of the World. How it is takes place this fact of sin assuming, this is the mystery of God-the Man, the only One sinless, Who has made Himself guilty for the sin of the World" (Agnetz Bojii, p. 384).

It is here, truly, a mystery which we cannot claim to fully understand, in itself, but we will be content with the weak light which is dropped upon it by the pale analogies offered by the relations amongst people.

The Holy Scripture tells us about Jesus that "(Isa. 53: 6) LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all", albeit "(Isa. 53: 9) He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth". The prophet predicts that "(Isa. 53: 11) by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities" and in the end He will be glorified because "(Isa. 53: 12) Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death". John the Baptist, with his gift as prophet, he unveils the character and the mission of Jesus in the short definition: "(Jn. 1: 29) Behold the Lamb of God, Who removes the world's sin". And Paul the Apostle declares: "(Ga. 3: 13) Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree". And in another place he tells more categorically: "(2 Co. 5: 21) For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew

no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”.

Sinless and though bearing the sins of the entire world, this is the great antinomy, the great mystery of the solidarity of Jesus with us. He didn't do any personal sins, neither with the word, nor with the deed, and it wasn't imprinted in His nature that inherited fund of sin. The sin was not a quality of His nature, it was not raising up from that nature, and there was no organic interweaving between that nature and the sin. He “was bearing” the sin, not “doing” the sin. That sin was a foreign one, of which He was not increasing through any adding, neither at least through an approval of the ones whom committed the sin. The sin of others was not assimilated in His nature or in His will, in order to become an active excrescence of them, an impulse towards the manifestation of the sin. It is not less true that Jesus was not behaving towards it like towards a foreign sin. Was not into Him the will to do the sin, but there was the state of spirit of the one who has done the sin and who regrets the fact of committing it. He was behaving towards the sin of the mankind like one who has done it and He is responsible, He is guilty for it. He constituted Himself like a subject responsible for the sin, like a fact which was done and it is done through others, and not like a subject willing to do the sin. “Not they had sinned, but I had sinned; not they commit sin and will commit sin, but Me”. These terms expresses the state of spirit of Jesus towards the sin of the people taken upon Him.

Jesus actually felt the pain, the regret, the responsibility for the sin of others. It was not a self-illusion which He had. We have indicated an analogy in the shame, in the pain, and in the guilt which the mother feels for the reproachable deed of her son. For how many times, through, we do not feel certain guilt for the sins of the one close to us, though we could not put the finger on somewhat participation or of our

own advice, to do those sins. We feel that there exists a general inertia which pulls the people towards sin and to that inertia we have also our part, because the total configuration of the historical or human circumstances we have also a certain place. We feel guilty for the sins of the others if not through what we have done, at least through what we have not done for the straightening of the total failures of the human life. And no matter how much we would have done, we still are not content, we still are not tranquil that what we have done it is enough. Our simple presence like a man among people, we feel it like participation to the guilt of the sins which are done by others.

There cannot be any other explanation but that there it exist closeness, an interweaving, a hidden communication, and a more profound intimacy than we can accomplish between the individuals in whom it is being actualized the human nature. As we become more capable of understanding the closeness between us and our fellow humans, our solidarity with their sins is revealed to us¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵⁷ This closeness is not constituted of an existential unity of all the people, from which the individuals would grow up only like some little rootlets, like affirms the Metropolitan Antony Hrapovitzchi, Zencowschi and, by and large, the Russian theological thinking. Antony says: "We must reject the idea that every person is a rounded whole, locked up in himself (microcosm) and to ask ourselves: lest there is not in all the people a common root, into which was kept the unity of our nature and in report with each different soul it appears a branch, though possessing a state of *self* and of liberty? The human *self*, in his full separation towards the «*non - self*» is, into an extended measure, an illusion. This illusion is hardened by our self-sensibility, developed on the basis of the sinful self-love, characteristic to the decayed humanity" (apud G. Florovschi, Puti Ruskago Bogoslovija, Paris, 1937, p. 429). There exist a common will of the entire mankind. This unity, which is not only spiritual, but it is also essential, real, it is revealed in the Church and in the future life. "In the future life

That is why, while we have a special sensibility towards our responsibility for the sins of the ones who are close to us, we remain exterior and indifferent to the sins of the ones who are strangers to us.

The power which we notice or which we of increase this closeness though, it is the love. The love helps us, consequently, to feel responsible for the sin of our fellow human, to consider that sin like being ours. This power unveils us our solidarity with the fellow humans and it produces a certain identification of our self to the one another, responsible for committing the sin. Love notifies, after it partially produces and increases, the intimacy, because where the love is, the closeness is so great than there exists a mysterious identification and substitution of the selves in what regards the responsibility. The prerequisite condition for notifying or for producing this closeness to the identification

this unity will manifest more powerfully than the multiplicity of the human persons". "Through this Christ has saved us, that, by being in a deep unity with us, His sufferance from love has become to us a source of victory upon the sin". "Why the spiritual torments of Christ for the human sinfulness, were to us for salvation? Because His together suffering love (sostradatelnaiia liubov), it has united His spirit with our souls and we have sipped for them, from the spirit of Christ, like from a water spring of holiness and, through this, we have defeated the sin" (w. c. p. 430). We do not affirm a unity of persons in the sense of their reduction at a single deep *self*, at that there is a single background of substance. But, without any doubt, the mankind is a region of the existence, in its own way, a whole. The singular persons are close to one another, they understand each other, they communicate. This is so much than the "*self*" cannot live without "*you*". There is a unity between people in the sense of a whole of "*selves*" who still preserves their individuality. The mankind constitutes a "Wirrheit", like L. Binswanger says, w. c. But only love creates this.

through love it is, in any case, the participation at the human nature. The simple presence like man among people it is, for a sensibility sharpened through love, the sufficient reason to feel the own guilt for the sins of the others.

The son of God, by the fact itself that He has made Himself man, and He has accepted the responsibility for the people's sins, He engaged Himself into an burdening solidarity. The fact that He has not become a man by the will of others, but by His own will, and by the fact that He has not inherited through a natural generation the background of the hereditary sin, this does not means that He has not entered the human solidarity of the responsibility for sin. Into a certain regard He has taken a greater responsibility than the ones who are born like human individuals without to be questioned before, by the fact that He has not protected Himself against the communication with the sinful ones, but He has firmly accepted to be like one of them. The voluntary - and not a involuntary one - origin of His human existence is not a ground for a more loose connection and solidarity with the mankind, but for the voluntarily, moral, and loving character of this solidarity¹⁵⁸.

¹⁵⁸ He was not compelled to be solidary with the miserable destiny of humanity, but though He accepted this solidarity. Without being a sinner, He accepted to bear the human sins; He accepted to be made responsible for the human sins, He accepted to live in the society of the villains who offended God and over whom hovered His anger. The German philosopher Heidegger (*Sein un Zeit*) considers that an essential element of the man's structure is the conscience of his **throwing** into world without being questioned (*Geborgenheit*), of throwing into his human structure, on which depends the whole complex situation which we call world. Consequently, the man feels himself thrown also in the state of responsibility towards the fellow humans and for their sins. This fact diminishes somehow his responsibility. But Jesus has not His origin into the man like a "throwing" into this situation, but into a fully

voluntary act. The responsibility for the solidarity with the human destiny it is not shadowed by any circumstance. On the other hand, the bigger is that responsibility for everything human is, the more sublime the act of its establishing is. In order to be possible to somebody an assuming of the responsibility for the people in the supreme degree, through a voluntary act, he must not be forced through the sin from inside his person to a solidarity with the people. The supreme responsibility for people cannot have it but somebody who voluntarily becomes a man and voluntarily stays in this state, namely he doesn't become infected by sin. Of course, the fact that Jesus didn't become a man through a "throwing" in this state, it didn't deprive Him of an existential element of the humanity. For a consummated Son like Him, the wish of the Father to embody it is more powerful than any other force which would have thrown Him into the state of a man. Nevertheless He **voluntarily** fulfilled the will of the Father (Heb. 10: 5). His embodiment is an act both free and mandatory, and **in this obligation** He feels the "throwing" more powerful than any man. But maybe it is more appropriate not to nominate with the rigid and mandatory term of responsibility, the report which results between Jesus and the people from the way in which He has become man, but with the term "love" or "communion". Unlike the sentiment of "throwing", which is caused by the worry, by the sentiment to see yourself here into a strange world, without being asked before, the love gives you the sentiment of having been always like now, the sentiment of a presence without a beginning and without an end. This presence doesn't give you the sentiment of a nothing at the beginning and of another nothing at the end, but it gives you the sentiment of a resting in the timeless fullness of the being, into the actual communion from ever. ("Das Schon des Schon – **seins** in der **Welt** der Sorge ist ein ganz anderes Schon als das Junige des Schon – immer – gewesen – **seins** in der **Heimat** der Liebe. Dort bedeutet es das «ohnmächtige» Schon – Geworfen – sein des Daseins in die «fremde» Nichtigkeit seines Gründers, das Schon – überfallen – sein von und Gefallen – sein – in seine «Schwere», hier das Vertraut sein mit dem Dasein als liebende Wirrheit“. L. Binswanger, w. c. p. 95, 96). The love doesn't ask, dissatisfied, what is has been reached like, to the relation between you and

Though He has not received the human nature through the natural generation and the Holy Ghost protected Him at conceiving against the hereditary sin, though, His nature, received from the nature of Virgin Mary, it is entirely a human nature, in intimate interweaving, like the nature of all the human individuals, tied on it with all the threads, painfully vibrating by the burden of the sin which presses it, feeling Himself in solidarity with the human nature. If in a huge building all the bricks are wet, and only one is dry, without any doubt that that brick will be influenced too by the aspect and the general atmosphere of the building; or, if into some community, all its members feel themselves burdened

the people whom you love. The love is the affirmation of this relation; it is the affirmation of the loved ones. Jesus didn't feel Himself thrown into a foreign place, because, of one hand, coming on earth, He was both here at "home" in the bosom of the Father, and on the other hand, He came voluntarily into the relation of love with his brothers. The fact that He came on earth out of love and He has remained in love, it explains the power which He has worked at the salvation of the people with: this is nothing else but the love. At M. Heidegger the man-worry asks himself: "Hat je Dasein als es selbst frei darüber entscheiden und wird es je darüber entscheiden können, ob es ins Dasein kommen will oder nicht?" L. Binswanger declares that for love such a question does not exist. "Hat Liebe je danach gefragt und wird sie ja danach fragen können, ob Dasein ins Dasein kommen will oder nicht? Ist Liebe nicht die «selbstverständliche» Bejahung dieser – von ihr selbst aber nicht gestellten – Frage ob-? Anders ausgedrückt: ist sie nicht die Selbstverständlichkeit der «Geborgenheit» des Daseins ins Sein, in ihrer eigenen Sprache: Gunst oder Gnade? Bedeutet Gunst oder Gabe doch gerade das fraglose Einsen und Einigen des Daseins mit seinen Sein, den Frieden des Daseins und seine Jenseitigkeit kein Problem für die Liebe... Das bildet dafür aber den alleinigen rechtmäßigen Zugang zur Einheit von Ich und Du, zur liebenden Wirrheit" (p. 609-610).

by a certain disposition consequently to some reproachable antecedents, and on the basis of some forebodings, even there is one who personally has nothing to reproach to himself, he will feel also the general pressure. Everybody feel guilty in report with the shortcoming of his fellow humans, even if he was not copartner to causing it, for the simple reason that he has not done everything to save them¹⁵⁹. And until He succeeds to save them, he works out of this conscience of the guilt.

We can use for the understanding of this profound solidarity some expression of Father Sergei Bulgakov, though their exaggerated and unnatural character let the impression that they would comprise even the idea of a real participation of the nature of Jesus Christ to the human sin, a thing which we completely reject. "Christ receives upon Him the sin of the World and He lives it like His, to the end... Into the depth of the embodiment, which, through the impropriation of the human nature, it is the identification of the Son to the whole mankind, and there it stays also the impropriation of the sin and of the sins, by receiving them like His. The humanity is tied not only through the cyclic solidarity into good,

¹⁵⁹ Heidegger defines the conscience of guilt also like a responsibility for the shortcoming of others. We feel guilty for the minus from the life of the people, because we have not covered this minus. ["Der Begriff des Schuldigseins: Grundsein für einen Mangel im Dasein eines Anderen... das Ungenügen gegenüber einer Forderung, die an das existierende Mit sein mit Anderen ergeht", (Sein und Zeit, p. 282)]. But, as the ordinary man cannot escape by this guilt, because he cannot exceed his incapacity to remove the others from the insufficiency of their existence, Jesus Christ could do this. But until He did the whole salvation of the people, He felt the guilt more than any other man, since, unlike any other man, he knew that He could save them. Of course that He voluntarily assumed this conscience of the responsibility, through His free embodiment.

but also into sin; all the people are guilty not only for themselves, but for all them and into all of them and with all of them. Though this conscience escapes our sight into a concrete way, it could be comprised into the conscience of the New Adam..." This self identification of Jesus to the mankind, which stays at the basis of the doctrine of the redemption, it forces us to literally understand - and not metaphorically - is word from the final Judgment: "(Mt. 25: 40) (...) Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me".

This identification, on the basis of which the human nature of Christ is tied with the nature of all the people, it extends the human life of Jesus into all the human history... What must be understood this general connection like: like being external, empirical, or like being internal, meta-empirical? The first kind is, obviously, excluded by the fact that Christ lived a human individual life, a determined one, and, in the same time, a life limited in space and time. Therefore, it is an internal connection and it is done through the fact that the human life of Jesus, in all the temporal acts and moments, had also a supra-temporal persistent meaning.

"The connection of Christ with the world and with the humanity it is not suppressed through His getting far from the world at His Ascent, but it is preserved, also being extended over the past and over the future, by and large, over the entire world - in a supra-temporal way"¹⁶⁰.

If the deep connection between people shows us the possibility of an assumption of the responsibility for the sins of the others, how comes that Jesus has taken upon Him all the responsibility for them, so people to be liberated by guilt on the basis of His sacrifice? Between people we meet often the case of

¹⁶⁰ W. c. p. 377.

participation to life of others, but are we meeting there the assumption of the entire guilt and the liberation of the ones from under her? Analyzing the state of spirit of the one who, drove by a great love, feels responsible himself for the sin of the other, we are surprising without any difficulty in it the dominant tendency to totally escape that individual from under the guilt and from under the punishment which is expecting him. The will of the assumption of the sin of the other has a radical and total character; she cannot reconcile with the thought to let also to that individual a part of guilt and sufferance. As bigger is the love towards the ones close to us, as much manifests more decisively the will of total assumption of their guilt. Jesus Christ, tied by all people through the limitless love of His godhead, could take the responsibility for the entire guilt of everybody. What manifests like a tendency in the imperfect love of the people towards the ones deficiently close to them, must be a fact for the perfect love of God becoming even closer by all people in a supreme way. By making Himself man, by making for the second time the hypostasis of the same human nature which is worn by all the human subjects, through the mediation of His nature, He wore in a certain way all the mankind like a subject of it. Every human self bears, in a certain sense, the human nature, actualized in all the human hypostases, but in a passive way. He lacks the love which to actively call upon him everything that is burdening the actualized human nature in countless hypostases. Each man bears the responsibility for the entire fund of sin from within the human nature, but not a responsibility which he voluntarily assumes, but a responsibility which he speaks against, and he pushes it over others.

The love is an element which strengthens the unity in the frame of the human nature hypostasized in numerous selves. And the lack of love weakens the

human nature, or, at least, it takes the moral-spiritual character, living it at most like a fact of substance. Jesus, by having an unlimited love towards any man, He creates a maximum closeness between the human nature hypostasized in Him and the one hypostasized in all the human subjects. His love is the magnet which attracts upon Him everything that has resulted like guilt from the sin manifested through all the human subjects.

But, if it had been like that, it shouldn't have attracted, this love, also the sinful thought and impulse which moves itself into the hypostasized nature into the human subject? The love for a fellow human it doesn't compel you to commit the sin with him. A contrary, it compels you that, besides all the closeness to him, to keep yourself clean, to be able to help him to raise up.

The intimacy of the fellow human you can find it, you can meet it, and you can look at it, in its face through your intimacy, without this making yourself sinner like him¹⁶¹.

Even more than this, the meeting moments of the two intimacies, also made the fellow human to withdraw from sin. The meeting of the two intimacies it is accomplished just through this: that this meeting

¹⁶¹ This is the sense of the general and concise formulations of the Saint Maximos the Confessor regarding the assumption of the sins of the humanity by Jesus Christ. After him, there are two kind of assumption of the states and of deeds of the other: one **relational** and one **natural**, ontological. The first one it is realized through intentional acts, the second one through organic transmission. Through relational assumption I assume acts and states which I am not doing or suffering. The not sinful shortcomings of the human nature, the ones who represent the punishment of the sin, but there are not sinful themselves, like the need for sleep, food, the fatigue, the pain to the tears, the fear of death Jesus has assumed them ontological. The sinful tendencies and states, He has only rational assumed them.

makes the fellow human also to detach himself from the confusion of the sin. Somehow, the intimacy of the man, his centre, it remains outside sin, but the sin throws the forgetfulness over it, and it covers it with fog¹⁶². Even if it would not be so, in any case, the retrieved intimacy of the man it removes the sin from over it and it doesn't feel anymore, upon itself, the impulses towards sin.

Thus, one can say that the closeness Jesus has placed Himself towards the people it was right the closeness to this intimacy of the people, which doesn't have of it no longer has in it the impulse towards sin, but it but it feels the responsibility and the pain for it. What Christ absorbed from the people through His sin, it was, so, this pained responsibility. Jesus has taken upon Him, for the whole mankind, the role of the intimacy from within each man, the role of an interior centre, of pristine moral sensitiveness, vibrating of responsibility for the sin of everybody.

The humanity of Jesus was not substantially different from the one of the other people. But it has stayed on the highest level of moral sensitiveness, a responsible and loving one. The humanity of Jesus showed in the supreme degree these noble and essential features of the man's structure. If somebody possesses or he liberates in himself, in certain measure, these features, he will descend into the intimacy of the people and he will make possible that communication from self to self, by taking, on one hand, from his fellow human, everything that burdens him and, by this, easing him, and on the other hand, by transmitting him everything he has good and noble" – Jesus, by possessing these features in such a measure that we cannot imagine, He descended, in

¹⁶² **B. VISESLAVTEV**, The importance of the heart in religion, in Puti, Paris, 1025, p. 79, translation by D. Stăniloae in Theological Magazine, Sibiu, 1934, No. 1-2 and 3-4; V. Zencovski, The evil in man, Puti, 1938, May-June.

fact, deeper than anybody, into the intimacy of people, taking from them their burden.

Who does not feel, when he descends with his intimacy in front of the intimacy of his fellow human who is burdened by sin, that he wants to take and he takes, actually, this responsibility upon him, at least partially? And, from the burdened with responsibility ones, who doesn't feel himself relieved of responsibility, when he has the luck to meet somebody in his intimacy, to listen to his confession and to willing to relieve his destiny? But this descending into the intimacy of the humanity of others, it is only partially accomplished by the common man. So, also the relieve of others' guilt, by taking that guilt upon himself, it is only partial too, and from an extremely limited external circle of people, but there takes place a real passing of the sinful burden from one to another, at least partially, because otherwise we will be deceived by the generous sentiment that we can, by participating to responsibility, to relieve the other one, like also the sentiment of relieve which is lived by the other one when somebody makes himself responsible for that one. Like we told before, the ethical impulses of our being would otherwise prove to be some illusions.

But what is accomplished only partially through the voluntary participation of a man to the responsibility of the another, it is integrally accomplished through the Man Who is also God. The limitless love of Jesus towards his fellow humans it makes Him, actually, the intimate centre of the human nature actualized in countless hypostases, it makes Him the profound Intimate of each man, capable of taking from everybody's shoulders the burden of the sin. The problem of Jesus and of His reports with the people it is the problem of the greatest mysterious possibilities which are hidden into the spiritual life of the humanity. Jesus unveils to us, He indicates us the true being of the mankind, the direction which it

must be accomplished in¹⁶³. Not spatially, not materially, is Jesus the centre of the mankind, but by the deepening to the ultimate intensity of love, responsibility and purity. These ones constitute the conditions which make possible the saving work of Jesus, the assuming of the guilt of the entire mankind and the sufferance for it. Like we saw in another place, these features of the humanity of Jesus they aren't in a contradiction with His eternal essentiality, but there is a correspondence between them. The perfect mankind of Jesus, like maximum love and responsibility in the cycle of the human nature, it is not but the created correspondence of His divine essentiality; it is not but the orientation of this essentiality towards people, its placing in report with these ones. Jesus Christ is not but the transposition in human image of the divine person of the Son of God, and the human face in its true being is the most adequate manifestation, seen and close, of the divinity of the Son. The Son of God, like a model and a like deep and dynamic centre of the true humanity, by embodying Himself, He awakened into man the conscience about His closeness, and He proved His kinship with the man. Where it was before an imperceptible centre, and abstract and unknown by man center, through embodiment it has been concretized, and He has made the man to realize about this approach, in order to be able to benefit of it. Before

¹⁶³ **D. A. SCHLATTER** says in "Das Dogma und das Kreuz", Zweite Auflage, Gütersloh, 1913: „Die Christologie und die Anthropologie sind einander unentbehrlich. Wir verstehen Jesus Weg nicht, es sei denn, wir verstehen uns selbst und verstehen und nicht, es sei denn wir verstehen ihn. Eins beleuchtet hier das andere. Das Menschsein heißt, gibt uns den Schlüssel zu dem, was an ihm sichtbar wird, bringt in unser eigenes Bewusstsein das Licht und löst uns das Rätsel des Menschseins auf“.

that, the man realized only vaguely about his being. The model, though it was in the centre of the mankind, He was hidden. The light was hidden into darkness. "(Jn. 1: 10) He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not". And, because the man didn't recognize Him - the model of the man's true being - the man didn't know himself.

In intimate human form and closeness, Jesus descended His limitless love and divine self-obligation, the only love capable of taking upon itself the supra-human responsibility for the whole sin of the mankind, a responsibility which was bigger than the mankind's powers of bearing it.

Actually, the identification of Jesus - through the unity of nature, but, especially, through personal love - to the profound intimacy of the mankind, it had at the beginning only a subjective character. Without the personal intimacy of people to be awakened, He placed Himself in the situation of the one who is in report with it, in the state of the one who is experiencing the love, the responsibility, the communication with the intimacy of everybody. He was at the door, ready to enter, ready to embrace anyone who was awoken and who opened. Objectively, the closeness it was accomplished. Objectively, He felt Himself burdened by all the responsibility for the sins of the people. His love shows its limitless intensity also in the fact that, without being the state of communion between Him and people produced from both sides - which increases the impetus of assuming of the foreign responsibility - He found in it the power to live the assuming of this guilt, which is an experience of untold tenderness and closeness to the other one.

Thereby, He could show Himself to the Father like a bearer of the entire guilt of the people; even if those ones, they didn't realize the intimate closeness of the God-the Man to themselves and the assuming of their guilt by Him. And, because they did not realize it, they

did not make the closeness of Jesus to them to be a subjective closeness too, and the guilt remained upon them, though the guilt was wholly upon Him and He was suffering for it. Objectively, their guilt was assumed by Jesus and, for that guilt, He has started giving satisfaction to God, but, subjectively, they did not know and they did not recognize this fact, they did not want to give away their responsibility, they kept it upon them and the responsibility has this character too, after it is assumed by many, it stretches upon all of them. Until the intimacy of the man is not awakened at the intimate call of Jesus, the man doesn't realize the supra-natural, the overwhelming love of Jesus and, so, the man doesn't experience the confidence in the insurance he is given that Jesus has assumed the full responsibility for the sins of the man. Only when you have experienced the full love of a fellow human, only then you have experienced, also, the relieve you are given by the insurance that He has taken the responsibility for your sins. And the love of Jesus, who assumed the responsibility for the guilt of the people, it was fully manifested in death. That's why, it was established that the opening of the intimacy of the man at the calling of His love to be done only after the death of Jesus, namely when His love presenting itself with the supreme proof of its greatness. There are three spiritual phases which the man crosses through, in report with the responsibility for his sins: in the first one, his intimacy being fully drowned into the darkness of the sins, he doesn't feel any guilt for them; in the second one, his intimacy, waking itself up from this state of spiritual insensitiveness, it experiences the conscience of the guilt; finally, in the third one, his intimacy, by being in front of the love of Jesus, Who assures the man of the assuming of his guilt, the man experiences the liberation from that guilt. The second phase, which is produced into man through the fact that God has manifested in a certain way His presence

at a certain distance, it is an effect of the preparatory divine grace. The third phase is the result of the communion accomplished between Jesus and the intimacy of the man. Now the man feels that the guilt does not stay only upon him, because Jesus has removed it. If only the endless love of God, descended through embodiment in the front of the intimacy of every man, it can assume in a real manner the guilt for their sins, likewise, only the answer of the man to this love, through trust, it can set the man free from it. Through the fact that Jesus feels the whole closeness to each man, He can really take the responsibility for the sin. But the man also must feel the closeness to Jesus, to reach the conscience of his responsibility for the sin, and then to let it, confidently, on His shoulders.

The responsibility for sin, responsibility which Jesus has taken, it was not only a subjective state, but the Father also regarded his like being responsible. We have seen that the responsibility for sin it can be multiplied and assumed by many persons, even if only one has sinned. Through the simple personal will to become responsible for the sin of somebody, you have attracted the responsibility for that sin. The participation to the responsibility or its assuming, it is not obtained only through the participation to the sin, but also through the decision to participate to responsibility or to assume it. It couldn't be thrown on your shoulders by the will of somebody else, if you have not sinned, but you can attract it through your own will. The origin of the assuming of a responsibility for the foreign sin it is of ethical character, it is the highest expression of our ethical being, of our wish to help the other one, and to sacrifice ourselves for him. This supreme impulse of our ethical being it has a so-called creative force: it establishes not only subjectively, but also objectively, ontologically, like relation with God, our responsibility for the sin of the

other one.

What is this thing explained like? Firstly, by the motif that God Himself has created, like a possibility, this character of the relations amongst people, making the destiny of one depending on the ethical deed of the other one, interweaving and inter-compelling, like in a whole, the human hypostases. The second one, because of the decision of assuming the responsibility for the sin of another, it is not only the highest ethical deed, but, in the same time, it is also a decision to stand next to him, to share his fate. When you assume the responsibility for the sin of another, you have decided to associate yourself, and to identify yourself to him, to attract upon you the opprobrium which presses upon him. Out of love for him, you have placed yourself into a society hated by God. Without being a solidarity with the sinner, it is a passing on his side. We have seen that the salvation of the man, his forgiveness from the part of God, it cannot be accomplished without satisfying of the moral order from the basis of the spiritual life. This order, which at surface it expresses a juridical precision and constancy, it asks for the one who has done good to be rewarded. But also this order asks for the one who is solidary, not only in the evil deed, but also in the responsibility for it, with the perpetrator, also, to suffer the punishment. Jesus, by taking not only a part of the responsibility of the people for the sin, but by taking the entire responsibility, He has become, actually, responsible in front of the juridical expression of the existence of the moral order, attracting upon Him its reaction. This way, the highest moral deed of assuming the responsibility for the sin of the other one, it is in the same time punishable. But, just through this, it earns its moral greatness. Otherwise, it would be an easy act. Assuming the responsibility it would not have been anymore, in fact, an assuming of responsibility in all the gravity of the meaning of the word, and it would lack this real bridge

from man to man, of the real substitution of a fellow human in his trouble. People would remain, despite of the entire physical closeness, at an impassable distance, everyone enduring his destiny in isolation. In this association of the high ethical deeds with the punishment, it stays hidden also the sense of the great tragic figures.

Finally, the creative power of objective responsibility of the decision of assuming the responsibility, it is also explained, in case of Jesus and of the hereditary sin, through the unity of the human nature. The entire human nature attracted the godlike "anger", it became the object of the reaction of the divine majesty and of moral order. God didn't artificially undo the wires which were tying the nature of a hypostasis on the whole human nature. Jesus, through embodiment, He has placed Him voluntarily like a morsel in the whole over which was hovering the godlike "anger".

But if these considerations can help somehow the explanation of the objective character of the responsibility of Jesus for the human sin, it remains to try to understand forward, how it was possible to concentrate upon Him the whole sufferance like a consequence of this responsibility.

The painful living of the responsibility for sin, itself, it is also a divine punishment, not having only a subjective character, but also an objective one. It is produced by the free will of Jesus, but also by God's deed, Who, by ordering the things like so, He gave the act of the assuming of the responsibility a profound ethical gravity and signification. Jesus felt the responsibility for the entire sin of the mankind, like a dreadful pain, sent in the same time by God. The assuming and the bearing of the responsibility for the sin of the mankind it wasn't to Him only a gesture and a theatrical play, but it was a continuous and quiet moaning under this burden. He had to feel the huge offense that was brought to God by the whole mankind,

like His own deed, and He also felt like being His state, the state of perdition which the entire mankind fell into. Only His sensitiveness which, on one hand, it had the human vibration, and on the other hand, it had the resources of intensity which the godhead gave Him, He experienced this pain into an measure equivalent to the entire human sin. By making Himself responsible for the offence brought by the entire mankind, He felt Himself also as hold accountable, by God. Decided to be hold responsible for all the offense brought to God, He endured to see God regarding Him as such and being set, consequently, a distance of a spiritual order. Without being a sinner, by the fact that He has made himself man and He has taken upon Him the entire responsibility of the mankind, all the sins were staying crowded upon Him, not like being done by Him, but hanging on the responsibility which He has assumed.

The responsibility reminds of sin. When somebody presents himself to us like being responsible for a mistake, even if he has not done it, we are seeing at him attracted the thread of responsibility, and the sin. The objective condemnation of the sin, its compromising in front of everybody, it is done in this case by enduring some sufferings, by the person who has taken the responsibility, and by this, that person is the representative or the bearer of the sin, even without committing it.

The sin is somehow crushed in itself; its power is taken, due to the expiatory sufferings which are coming after it. Although, the sin is not a self standing hypostasis, so it can be condemned only through a human person. But by the fact that God condemns the sin through a person, who has not committed it, it shows, though, that not all the sinful persons are hated by Him, and He wants not to abolish them, but to abolish the sin. The people watching at the condemnation of the sin through the person of Jesus, the sinless One, they can realize that what God wants

is to stigmatize the sin, and not the sinful person. He detaches from them their sin in order to condemn it, but God still lets the sin tied to a person at least somehow through an external connection. But He ties the sin to a sinless person, to not be possible to say that God hates the sinful man and not the sin. In the case of the sufferance of Jesus for the human sin, we have in the same time, the detachment of this sin on the contingent and varied plane, and its raising, onto a more general plan, like a quality which is hated, in itself, by God. But, in the same time, the general reality of the sin is depending on the concrete being of Jesus, being shown that He always has a concrete existence, being the manifestation of a man. The divine majesty and the moral order receive in this way their satisfaction, but into a person who, on one hand, by being sinless, He demonstrates that God doesn't allow the sufferance out of hate towards a person, and, on the other hand, by having the godhead like fundament of His humanity, He can endure such a huge sufferance without remaining forever crushed under the pressure on it. The Holy Scripture says how through Jesus, Who ascended on the cross, God crucified the sin on the wood, and He abolished the sin¹⁶⁴.

¹⁶⁴ . Pt. 2: 24: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."; II Co. 5: 21: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him"; Ro. 8: 3: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh". Saint Maximos the Confessor develops the idea that, while to the other people the death has the meaning to condemn the nature for its attachment to sin, at Jesus, Who had not sin, for at His birth the lust didn't preside, the death has no longer the meaning to disintegrate the nature, but to

This composition of the things, it doesn't have, though, only an artificial character, but it is based on

dissolve the sin. Through death, His nature is liberated from the passion of the sin. "The death, derived after the disobedience, it was reigning over entire nature, by having like ground the voluptuousness which has its beginning in the first disobedience. Because of it, the nature was surrender to death. Though, God, by making Himself man and by not assuming like source of His birth according to the body the unfair pleasure, due to which it was brought against the nature the right condemnation through death, but by voluntarily receiving death in his suffering nature, according to the nature, namely enduring it, He has changed the meaning of the death, no longer being a condemnation of the nature, but of the sin. Because the death was impossible to be, to the one who does not have His existence out of lust, a condemnation of the nature; now death has become the abolishment of the ancestral sin, due to which the fear of death was reigning over the whole nature. If in Adam the death was a condemnation of the nature, which had the voluptuousness like origin of coming to existence, rightly speaking, the death in Jesus has become a condemnation of the sin, the nature receiving again in Him a beginning of the existence, clean of any voluptuousness. In this way, as the sin condemned, in Adam, the nature to corruption in death, due to the voluptuousness..., likewise in Jesus, due to the righteousness, the nature condemned the sin, for the nature was disrobed in Jesus, totally, of the provenance out of voluptuousness... Thereby, **the same death in Adam exists for the condemnation of the nature due to the sin, and in Jesus for the condemnation of the sin due to the righteousness.** The first one, by suffering due to the sin towards the condemnation of the nature, he justly suffers death; the second one, by not suffering due to the sin, He voluntarily receives death, which is the cause of the sin, for the sin's abolishment." Into the old man, death is a weapon of the sin, for the destruction of the nature; into the one who lives in Christ, death is a weapon of the nature towards the destruction of the sin. Quaest. ad Thalassium 61, G.P. 90, 633 D – 636 A B, 637 A.

the ethical interweaving of the human destinies. What we told before about the ethical seriousness of the assuming of the responsibility for the sin of the other one, and about the real sufferance which this solidarity brings with itself, it comes together into a wider meaning with what we have just told about this divine composition.

In this way, by being dressed in a real way with the human sin, which is so hated by God, and by having to endure the death, it is explicable the distance which Jesus felt that was instituted between the Father and Him. Here is where it made its apparition, the great and fearful mystery of Jesus "forsaking" by the Father. His eternal happiness being the loving intimacy with the Father, and the love of the Father towards Him, the greatest pain was produced to Him by this spiritual distance on which, like the one burdened with the human sin, He must feel it. The sufferance He bore for the sin, it hurt Him only because it was the expression of the distance the Father put between Himself and Him. To the beloved Son of the Father, this distance is unspeakable more painful than to a man who feels that God left him. These are the dreadful torments endured by Jesus in that night from Gethsemane garden, and which are reckoned by some theologians more dreadful than the torments of the physical death, and considered like anticipation into the spirit of the death on Golgotha (Bulgakov, c. w.).

Who could dare to analyze in what it consisted, like a state of spirit in Jesus, and in its objectivity, this forsaking by the Father, which Jesus felt like a pain which exceeds all the pain of the people?

In which concerns its objective aspect, we believe that we can ascertain that it has a dialectic character. The "forsaking" of Jesus done by the Father, it is a leaving which relates, actually, to the sin He bears, not to Him personally, though the punishment of the sin must be felt by the person.

This is a forsaking and a love in the same time, both for the shown reason and for the act of Jesus of assuming a foreign sin it is an act of supreme ethical value, and the fulfillment of this act it is in the same time a fulfillment of the will of the Father, an obedience of Jesus.

The Father forsook Jesus, but He forsook Him grieved and this pain is the expression of His love. He let Jesus to suffer for the sin which is not His, but this sufferance hurts Him also. Bulgakov is right when he says that the Gethsemane's sad night is of the entire Holy Trinity (p. 383).

His humanity, forsaken by God and left to suffer for sin, felt finished, in the Gethsemane's night, and in blood sweating shouted out towards the Father: "If is possible, let this cup pass away from me!"¹⁶⁵.

¹⁶⁵ Without being too different from the affirmations developed by us, **Romano Guardini** sees the pain of Jesus from the Gethsemane's night: a) on one hand, like coming from the knowledge He had about the profound decadence and perdition of the mankind; b) "All the others are blind; only He sees. He sees the radical perdition of the man... with His human spirit possesses this knowledge. With His heart He feels the perdition and the perdition, even if it cannot snatch the eternal God from His happiness, it becomes into the soul of Jesus an unimaginable sufferance. It manifests in all He does... For this reason is Jesus so lonely". c) "Who could know how God-the Father showed Himself to Jesus, then (in Gethsemane)? He continued to be His Father, of course, and He also continued the conveying of His infinite love towards the Son, that love which is the Holy Ghost; although, once appeared a moment, which is explained by the word: «(Mt. 27: 46) (...)My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?». If we do not want rather to keep quiet in front of this word, we must say that, on that moment, the Father presented Himself to the Son, so that, the Son experienced that He is the thrown and repudiated man. Jesus tasted in that hour His unity with us to the unspeakable depths. This abandonment does not start only on that moment of the cross, but before. From before, Father appeared like the

One that is in report with the sinner, with the sinner of whose fate Jesus impropriated like being His. Maybe we are allowed to say that in the Gethsemane's hour that knowledge about the guilt and about the perdition of the man, it raised towards the face of the Father - Who started to «forsaken» Jesus - with its ultimate intensity. On that hour, that knowledge and sufferance took such a frightening character, so that the torment seen and the fear of Jesus, the «more insistent» prayer and the sweat, which (Lk. 22: 44) «was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground», they were nothing else but the last sign which came to us, like the storm from the surface of the ocean is the most exterior sign of a catastrophe produced on the bottom of the ocean and of which proportions exceeds our imagination power. In this consisted the hour from Gethsemane: the human heart and the human spirit of Jesus exceeded in the area of the extreme existence what it meant the sin in the front of the judging and revenging God; His Father asked Him to assume this sin like His own, and, if we are allowed to express ourselves like this, He experienced the anger of the Father towards the sin, directed against Him, because He assumed this sin and, together with this, the remoteness of the Holy God, Who forsook Him" (Der Herr, Werbung Verlag, Würzburg, 1941, p. 483-484). **D. Merejcovschi** explains the torment from Gethsemane from the Jesus fear of death and from experiencing the divine anger. "Jesus would have been a ghost without a body, or an automat of virtues, if He hadn't feared the bodily pain and the death... Jesus is full of life like no one else and, that is why He fears the pains and the death like nobody else." "But, no matter how big would be the fear of pains and of death into the Gethsemane's agony, the metaphysical fear is infinitely bigger". And Merejcovschi cites in continuation from Calvin "Would have not been accomplished anything, if Jesus had endured only the death of the body: He had to internally feel also the roughness of the godlike judgment, to step for us in front of God's anger, and to give satisfaction to the right judgment". (Tod und Auferstehung, Leipzig, 1935, p. 196, 198). The affirmations of Merejcovschi on the internal participation of Jesus to sin, they comprise a dangerous equivocal, like many expressions of Bulgakov too, so we cannot impropriate them. Behold what he writes further on: "Al the sin, all the evil, all

The sentiment of forsaking and fear, they were possible in Jesus Christ only because His godhead retained from manifesting His strengthening power.

On how many times do we feel a great exhaustion in our physical and spiritual being, due to the pain, because we have been forsaken by everybody, though the soul is present in us with the same powers of his, without manifesting them because of a reason or another?

This doesn't mean, though, that God-the Man wasn't active through His godhead by any means. Through godhead it was upheld, in the human nature, the love towards man, in the virtue of which Jesus was enduring the torment. Just in those hours

the curse of the world He had not only to take them upon Himself, but into Himself, in order to overcome them not only externally, but internally too, because He made Himself accomplice, in a certain way, to the sin of the world". **Karl Adam** expresses himself mostly in the same way: "The remoteness from God of the fallen human nature it was placed upon Him and He felt the fears as alive and unmediated, like He experienced, like the beloved Son of the Father, the existential closeness to God" (p. 327). "The specificity of the sacrifice of Jesus it consists of that He is reduced to Himself, of that He is refused the help of God from inside and from outside, that He is given the punishments of the hereditary sin, to the frightening exclusively-natural and exclusively-human, as much in His interior distress, but also in exterior history of His sufferings. By the fact that the guilt of the humanity it culminates in that the fallen man wanted himself to be only nature, on the Savior, who wants to give Himself like price of redemption for the guilt of the mankind, it hits Him with the whole undefeated power of the exclusively-human. Like some beasts tearing apart the powers of His earthly body, the fear and the scare penetrated also the inferior sphere of His soul and try to decompose His natural will, oriented towards sensitive, into disturbance and despair" (w. c. p. 329).

the love of God for people reached the highest intensity. We have seen in another place of this work, that the center of the godhead is the love, and that the almightiness is an irradiation of the love. But the love has many ways to manifest in, according to the targets it pursues. Sometimes, the love manifests in humbleness and sufferance. But also through this form, the love shows its power. The love in humbleness and sufferance of God-the Man, it washed away the human sin, it opened the way from God to man, and vice-versa.

The person of Jesus concentrated in the content of his thought, the whole divine love for man, in order to step in those dreadful tribulations, towards the fulfillment of the great deed of saving the people.

The sufferance of Jesus in Gethsemane garden equaled the sufferance which should have been felt by all the people for their sin, because He was hurt like weren't hurt all of them for being forsaken by the Father, which, like bearer of sin, He experienced it in those hours. Keeping the sin upon Himself, there came a moment in which to know, not like a divine subject, but like a human subject or, better said, not like a subject, but like an object, the profound displeasure of God for the sin. Two are the reasons why Jesus suffered a greater pain than of all the people together. Firstly, because His hypostasis has as characteristic, the eternal communion with the Father. How dreadful should have been to Him to endure, be it through the human nature, the darkening of this communion?

The most tormenting spiritual sufferance stays, through, in the last analyze, into the isolation sentiment, of being forsaken by everybody. The man thickened into sin, he doesn't feel his abandoning by God so painfully, either the lack of the true communion with the fellow humans. He is pleased with the surrogate of a shallow relation with these ones. But when the human being doesn't have even these things,

though, despite the whole his spiritual insensitiveness, he is invaded by an overwhelming sufferance.

Jesus, though, by having a sensitiveness not thickened through sin, and by having the experience of the full communion with the Father, He felt the infinite sorrow of the cup of the lack of communion with God. Placed into the role of the man who was stranger to God after the sin, Jesus felt the shortcoming and the insufficiency of this state like the whole humanity couldn't have felt it.

The second reason why the torments of Jesus from Gethsemane exceeded the ones of whole mankind, it consists of the fact that He took upon Himself the whole human sin. Every man bears the whole fund of the human sin. But this is a state that the man doesn't fully realize. No man sees in the entire depth and extent the sin he bears. On the other hand, the man's responsibility is somewhat attenuated by the fact that he was thrown into this existence loaded by sin. Jesus, though, realizes the whole extent of the sin He bears, on the basis of His exclusive responsibility. The dreadfulness of the sin which presses on Him, it shudders Him.

But, because of His love, through maximum closeness which He placed Himself in, towards the intimacy of the human nature, it absorbed all the sin upon Him, His identification to the center of the humanity it must attract upon Him the entire reaction of the divine opposition towards sin. For Jesus really felt all the human sin upon Him, and for He really substituted all humane selves into the bearing of the sin, He must felt Himself as substituting all the people in front of the divine reaction. If the possibility of really assuming the responsibility for the others it is the expression of a divine order, indicating a certain ethical communication hidden among the selves, then this order couldn't be sustained in all its gravity and seriousness but only if it is rounded by the

correspondent conclusion which is pulled out by God, letting the sufferance to descend upon the One Who took the responsibility. All the expiatory sufferance for sin, of the mankind, it must concentrate upon Jesus Christ. Through the same sensibility of the maximum love, through which He feels the responsibility for the entire human sin, He feels also the expiatory "punishment" for it. Into the sensitiveness of His limitless love, through which He attracts upon Him the entire human sin, so, in that sensitiveness is comprised the end the dreadful sufferance which melts down this sin.

Combining the second reason with the first one, we can say that Jesus, on one hand, through His purity and through the familiarity of the communion with God, and on the other hand, through His identification in love to the responsibility for the sin of the entire mankind, He possessed a sensitiveness which was able to feel the whole pain which should have been felt by the mankind under the "anger" and the estrangement of the Father. Being God, He placed Himself so perfectly on the human line, He identified Himself so fully to the humanity, than He could feel all the pain which should to be felt by a humanity which offended God. Only He could present how it should the mankind burn down the sin, in this regard, into the torments of an infinite regret, into the endless pain of the experience of the Father's upset and His remoteness. His being was the oven which burned the sin of the entire world. And only in His being, full of love towards Father and towards the people, it was possible such a fire to be lit up. He concentrated in those hours the whole sensitiveness of the mankind, by bearing the expiatory sufferance for sin and the whole needed sensitiveness. It was the mankind like it should be, the mankind suffering from distance the sin has placed between people and God, and by the deep sufferance and helplessness this state caused.

Despite the whole dreadfulness of those hours, into which the fear of death, the anguish of heart caused by desert, the exhaustion of the helplessness, which were interweaved into a tormenting entirety, this state of Jesus hadn't a reproachable character, but it was, on the other hand, what was needed for the victory upon sin, it was what God loved for the reestablishment of His authority disregarded through sin. This state was caused and dominated by the regret for the sin of the entire mankind, by the pain of His and humanity's remoteness from God, which was not excluding that Jesus was, in the same time, into prayer towards God. Even the wish to pass from Him this cup, He didn't try to fulfill it autonomously, but He addressed a prayer His Father, in order not to be according to His own will.

And the Father had pleasure for of this state of Jesus, like melting down of the sin, like a humiliation and a crushing of the sin. It was a sufferance like a homage paid to God, not like a sin against Him. Suffering the torments, Jesus was fulfilling the will of the Father; His passion had the highest ethical value, by being a sufferance in the place of all the people and for the abolishment of the sin. Jesus was, so, on one hand, "forsaken" by the Father, subjected to the treatment which was deserved by the sinful mankind, but, on the other hand, He was in accord with the will of the Father, in communion with it. He was, in the same time, far and close to the Father. Just because He was close to His heart, He felt so much His remoteness. Just because He loved Him so much, He was hurt by the forsaking. Jesus felt the Father like the craftsman Manole felt about his wife, while he incorporated her into the wall of the monastery¹⁶⁶.

¹⁶⁶ The Romanian legend of craftsman Manole, a stone mason, says that, in order to make the wall of the Arges monastery to hold, he incorporated his own wife into the wall.

Accepting to taste, in this way, to the bottom, the cup of the sufferance for the sin, without giving back, trying his abandonment by the Father, but being decided to endure it with the help of the His prayer towards the Father, Jesus has got closer with every hour to His death on Golgotha, like an accomplishment and a completion of His internal pains¹⁶⁷.

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Note. The Anglican theologian R. C. Morberly, in the book entitled "Atonement and Personality", (considered by J. K. Mozley like the richest book in influences upon Anglicanism in the nineteenth century, and like a turning back to the Greek Fathers, "Christologie und Soteriologie", in *Mysterium Christi*, Berlin, Furche-Verlag, 1930, p. 226-7), it sustains a theory in which are comprised many correct intuitions, though it appears to us that it does not speak very clearly about a satisfaction brought to God. But the repentance to

¹⁶⁷ Through Jesus has reached in spiritual His torments a level that has never been reached by any other human, suffering for all – and in this regard we agree with the Metropolitan Antony and with Sergei Bulgakov – through we do not think like them that the bodily death has staid like a torment a lot lower under the level of the spiritual sufferings, that they consider the true death. The spiritual torments are growing up to the moment of the expiration. Death is the culmination both of the spiritual torments, and of the bodily ones. As the bodily sufferings are growing up, the spiritual ones are growing up also. It is not possible to make a separation between them. The culminating point of the torment was not reached before, in the Gethsemane garden, no matter what reconciled was Jesus with the cup: in fact, the cup was not fully drunk in that night. In that night has only started the impart by it. The abandonment by the Father Jesus has felt it stronger in the fact that He left Him to die also, on the cross. Then He has said the words: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?".

death, which Jesus provided on behalf of the whole mankind, in which the theory of Moberly is summarized, it was necessary for reestablishing the human nature, it means that it corresponded to a divine order, since this reestablishing could not be accomplished without being a potential sufferance to death.

Behold the theory of Moberly, which in its general scheme does not go astray from the classical explanation of the Lord's death: "The general idea of an atonement of the sin it asks, in the same time, for a perfect power of penitence and a perfect power of sanctity". Who condemns the sin in itself, He must have the quality to condemn it. "In order my repentance for the past to be perfect, it should my person to be absolute one with the Justice in the condemnation of the sin into me and in my account. But such a personal identification to the Justice, if it had been possible, it would have been in a contradiction with my past" (p. 111). In order to be able to condemn in me the sin, I must be identified to the justice in all its purity, namely free of the sin from the past. These two features cannot be found together in any man. They were found only in Jesus Christ. He was the qualified judge of the sin, but He condemned it into Himself. But the question arises: it is possible the penitence of a person who has not sinned? Moberly answers that the substitutive sufferance for foreign sins it is a daily fact amongst people. Amongst people does not exist only exclusivity, like it seems to us at surface, but there is also a unity of nature increased through love. "We cannot enjoy and suffer, we cannot gain and loose, we cannot commit sin and repent, by being totally alone" (p. 119).

"But maybe one would say that, no matter how real and strong would be the repentance by sympathy, finally, the repentance of the compassionate friend cannot be so real and so personal like the ones of the

guilty himself. This is true - if it is anywhere true - only because of the limitation of our power and our will of compassion. It is true in proportion of our incapacity of unselfishness. *Where the capacity of abnegation starts getting closer to its ideal, we can find, in our experience, that the penitence of the good man in favor of the condemned fellow human not only that it anticipates and it directs the possibility of that one towards repentance, but even his repentance is sharper, and deeper, and more real than anything can be made in this direction by the condemned one in person. The presence of the sin into the person of this one it melts the sharpness of the power to detest the sin.* I want to hate the sin, and I hate, into a certain degree, the sin which terrorizes my will. But just because it is mine, because it has its place and its power in my own conscience about sin, I cannot hate it with the whole intensity of my heart, which the one who was never been touched by sin can hate the sin with; that intensity which I would want to hate it with, if all its power which weakens me had been melted down and I personally would have been again in accord with the justice of God (p. 121).

To illustrate this, Moberly challenges himself to the case of the mother.

"The repentance of the child it can be more cruel, more violent; but, comparatively, it is superficial, confuse, helplessness, and unreal. The pain of the mother it is not smaller, but bigger, because she is outside of that troubling presence of the sin. She is less despaired, but she is more profound... The heart of the son cannot be broken, at least not right now. Only later it can be, when the penitence will have done its gradual work, by penetrating, by comforting, and then he will feel the sin and he will see it like it is" (p. 122).

The mother feels responsible for the sin of his son. Her substitutive capacity of penitence it stays in report

with her degree of purity. The heavier the sin is, the more her capacity of true penitence it evaporates. "The power of penitence, namely the true penitence, it depends not on the degree which her own unrighteousness is in, but it depends on the degree which the penitence is not of her own" (p. 123)

"It depends on two things: the first one is the degree of own identification not to the sin, but to the holiness. This does not mean, of course, that she must reach the absolute identity to the holiness... And the second one is the fullness of her capacity to identify her own self to the being of the child. The slightest trace of egotism it blunts the sharpness of it. Her perfection must be a true triumph of love". Of course, no earthly mother has reached yet the degree of an absolute love. There is a unity of nature between people, which unveils them and which is being deepened through love. "One participates to the nature of the another". "If under the power of temptation one has felt, the other one will look at the temptation of the fall, like a spectator from outside... What has happened is not understood from outside. It is felt, with some sort of fear, inside" (p. 129). "If the love was bigger and more perfect, the unity would be bigger than it is. If her obvious limit is the limit of love, which would be somebody's capacities of communion, of whose love would be absolutely limitless, with the living experience of the other one?... The mother illustrates this, by what she is, and not only like a preliminary way to suggest what she does not reach" (p. 126).

The perfection towards this direction it has been accomplished by God embodied like man. "He has made Himself, in a voluntarily way, one with the man, one in the nature, and one in the love: one in the absoluteness of the unity, so that the union of the most perfect mother with her child it is not, in comparison to the perfection accomplished by God, but a dark and distant shadow. He has made Himself one

with the man; He has made Himself man, He has made Himself humanity. He has impropriated, namely, that conscience of the man, that conscience of the sin, but which the man cannot accomplish the saving penitence for sin without; the full conscience of the sin into the full light of the holiness, this is His personal conscience. Thereby, the condemnation of the sin – not only from outside, but also from inside – through the power of self identification to holiness, into the act of self presentation like a penitent, it can be perfectly accomplished in Him”.

On one hand, Jesus has Himself to the conscience of the sin in its unmeasured fullness, like only God can see it. On the other hand, He shows the personal identity to the absolute justice of God. In the third place, by being fully identified to the sin and to the absolute Justice, He had the power to endure, everything must result out of the condemnation of the sin through the absolute Justice, for the reestablishment of His personal identification to the justice.

“On the cross, He offered, in this way, to God, like man, not only a sacrifice of ultra-obedience, but also the sacrifice of the supreme penitence, namely of the perfect identity to God in the condemnation of the sin, He Himself being so much identified to the sinners, than this to could constitute the condition to offer Himself for sin” (p. 127-128).

“The perfect penitential sacrifice of Christ, the One without sin, it is the true savior sacrifice for the sin. Only Him, Who knew in Himself the measure of God’s holiness, He could know in the human nature, which He has made His own, the full abyss of the sin estrangement from God, the real character of the punishing of the turning aside of God’s face. Only Him, Who has probed the abyss of the human conscience in report with the sin, on the basis of His inherent justice, He can condemn and to crush the sin into body” (p.

130).

Though, the sufferance and the death of Jesus are not a punishment endured by God. Here is the characteristic feature of Moberly's theory. "The suffering involved in this is not, in Him, punishment, or the terror of punishment" (p. 130).

God gives the punishment in order to bring the sinner towards penitence. As the penitence state has became more perfect, the punishment loses its external character, by becoming a self-tormenting. "All that is punishment until the penitence was produced, in the perfect contribution, it is part of the voluntarily condemnation of the sin, offered by the penitent with the whole his heart".

"In this way, in the great and mysterious sacrifice of the Calvary, it is not about a real revenge imposed by another, from outside. It is not an external equalization with the punishment... (p. 131). Here is not any element of hitting, on one hand, or of enduring the revenge, on the other hand. This death under the power of the physical and spiritual torments, it is the spontaneous voluntary action of the inherent justice, the brightness and the triumph of the inherent justice in the conditions which the justice can triumph in this case".

"He must not endure the human revenge". We feel that this is something too much "shocking and blasphemous for thinking". But, more than that, this means a "negation of the divine character of the eternal Father and of the divine being of the embodied Son". This "contradicts the whole conception about salvation". "God's revenge is the final consumption for the unrepentant, unsaved, unforgotten, and unforgivable sin (p. 132).

"He must not endure the condemnation of the sin. But, in the bitter humiliation of a conscience self adapted to what the real sin is – and so, the condemnation of the sin – He bowed down His head

under everything the sufferance could mean, to where the experience of the death leads, this sufferance being the counterweight to the condemnation, like an extreme possibility of denial and destruction of the self". This death, by killing everything that was mortal into Him, it also killed the sin (p. 133).

Besides what we said introducing this note, it can be done, on the Moberly's theory, the following observation: the Moberly's explanation seems to keep God into a passivity towards the saving work of Jesus Christ. The sacrifice of Jesus stood in report with the moral law, because the man could not be escaped from sin without a sufferance which to be so clean and so big so that to evaporate the sin, without a sufferance which to end in death. And the moral law is the expression of God's will. The justice, which condemned the sin through the sufferance of Jesus, even if it was also into Jesus like a man, it was there only because this Man conformed Himself to the divine will. And the divine will was represented not only by Jesus like God, but also by the Father and by the Holy Ghost.

God Himself cannot be considered in a role of a penitent in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. And like judge of the sin cannot be considered only God-the Son, but God in all Three Hypostases. This thing emerges enough clearly from Moberly's theory, which, on one hand, it does not sufficiently highlight that Jesus suffered like man, and not like God, and, on the other hand, it highlights, rightly, the interweaved presence and work of the Father and of the Holy Ghost into the Son, though not for the condemnation of the sin, but for a substitutive penitence.

Jesus fulfilled the role of the penitent like man, but then in front of God. And the penitence means, actually, the enduring of the rough effects of the moral law consequently to the sin. When these effects can be endured into goodness and fullness, the subject is saved. When this isn't possible, they are prolonged

forever, as long as the sin prolongs itself. If the forgiveness of the people cannot be obtained from the Father without death, that means God ordered death for sin. Though, we cannot cogitate that He orders out of a caprice, but on the basis of a permanent order, namely the divine justice.

IX. 4. The Death on the Cross

What death is? Nobody can give a satisfying answer to this great question. For such an answer one should experience the death not only from outside, like a phenomenon endured by others, but also from inside. That being so, we must content ourselves with what we experience in the death of the others, and further to base ourselves on the certitudes produced in us by the profound intuitions of our being, like also on logically derived considerations from certain real data.

What we experience with our external senses in the death of our fellow humans is a man's ceasing to exist like a subject in our world. He remains a simple material object, on in a rapid decay.

The subject, though, he is not produced and he does not exist according to the natural laws. Though the laws which direct the physical life of the man are the same existing in the entire physical universe, nowhere these laws produce subjects anymore. Though needs a body which to function according to the laws of the nature, though he manifest through his body, the subject cannot owe his beginning only to these laws of the body and his love develops on a plan superior to them. That is why, a ceasing of the biological life of the body, produced according to some natural laws, it cannot mean *eo ipso* and a ceasing of the existence of the subject. He can no longer manifest himself through the bodily environment, which is usual in our world, but its abolishment cannot be, by any means, the

direct product, the organic product, of a phenomenon of a natural order. The death experienced at others, it cannot demonstrate the abolishment of those subjects. That death only tells us that a subject ceased to exist into the world accessible to us. In order to the abolished, by and large, a subject, there should take place, beyond the natural, experimental phenomenon, of the physical death of the others, an act of another character than the one owed to the natural laws.

The continuation or the not continuing of the existence of the human subject after his physical death, it depends not on the natural laws, but it depends on a power which must have a character superior to these laws, a character of a subject, but superior to the human subject.

The experience of the death of the others it sends us, in what concerns the continuation or the not continuing of the existence of the human subject, to faith: *I believe* that the superior subject, who has brought a subject to the existence, he will keep the subject into existence henceforth too, or *I believe* that he won't keep that subject in existence. The lack of faith is also a belief, but into a negation. The unbelief does not base itself, more than the belief does, on experience.

A contrary, by applying the logical cogitation to some data of the experience, these data can provide us, indirectly, deductively, a series of very plausible arguments on the continuation of the spiritual principle from within us also after the disintegration of the body¹⁶⁸.

The belief into the soul's immortality it has overwhelmingly powerful logical and scientific reasons.

¹⁶⁸ One can find a lot of new arguments, extracted from the results of the modern psychology and science and presented by the Romanian philosopher Ion Petrovici in the study entitled "Dincolo de orizont" ("Beyond Horizon"), published in the magazine *Gândul* (*The Thought*), September, 1939.

Though, the belief is still necessary. The supreme test of our faith it is done especially when we feel the breath of death upon our being. Then it is verified if our belief is so strong that, despite of the evidence of the end of our material being, which projects to us like a total end, to keep, through the faith, the surety that God would not let us in the nonexistence which gradually covers us up, but He will grant us a continuation.

The death is the ultimate test through which are separated the people who believe from the people who don't. The death endured with faith, it is thus an homage, the fullest homage brought to God. This character is had, in the most perfect degree, by the death like a sacrifice. The own death like sacrifice, it means renouncing to the life from here, to the life based on the natural and visible hopes, for the sake of God. We make of the life from here a gift to God, because God asks for it, for He wants us to show in this renouncement, how much faith in Him we are capable of. God does not ask us for the life from here in order to add it to His life, He doesn't ask us to give our life to Him in the literal meaning of the words, but through this, He asks for the supreme act of our faith in Him¹⁶⁹.

By and large, two conclusions can be formulated from the reality of the death and from the general attitude in front of it. First, death is something scary to our being, an event which does not suit the human being, which the human being wants to escape. This means the death is experienced like a punishment; like a universal punishment for humans, from the supreme Creator of the world. So, we all bear a guilt in front of Him, and like a sanction for this guilt, we must endure the death. In the second place, almost all the people,

¹⁶⁹ Paul Althaus, "Biet letzten Dinge", Gütersloh, 1933, p. 63.

near to the end, believe that they will not cease through to exist, and this belief it has, among others, its reason into the intuited fact and experimentally possible to be argued, that the reality of the subject it is not produced by the physical – chemical factor of the material organism. The deep belief of our being, like the intuition and the logic makes us to admit that no man totally ceases to exist, or that there is a possibility to be resuscitated to a new life on another plan of existence. The revelation which produces in us the full certitude, it confirms us both the faith that no man totally ceases to exist through the disappearance from the plan from here, and that, besides some people who will continue an existence which will only be a torment, a mix of being and of not being, there are some people who, through the divine intervention, for they have used the life from here to reduce their guilt, they will be partakers, after their death, to an existence happier than the one from here.

In this way, the death is, like both the conscience and the Revelation tell us, a punishment from God, but of such a kind that it doesn't exclude His mercy. The death exists according to a general human sin, but it is possible to not have, for some people, the meaning of a punishment, but that one of a passing into a fuller life.

The death concentrates in a bipolar tension both the destruction, like a sign that the humanity in its whole it attracted to herself this consequence, but also the possibility of the salvation, despite the whole consumption of the destruction. The salvation is accomplished through Jesus Christ. But even when the salvation it is not accomplished, the destruction through death is not a final act, but there it follows an existence on another plan, which bears though, into a certain way, the presence of the death, by being reduced to the minimum and, of this it consists its torment. At least in a tormented way, the existence continues after death, like a sign that God, even if He

destroys the life of the man on the plan from here, He does not want the man's total lost, but, if there was a little effort from the part of the man too, He would turn the death in the man's benefit.

The death has, thereby, a close connection with the sin. The death is the payment for the sin, and in the same time, the abolishment of the sin on the seen plan. The death is the last conclusion of the sin and it means the disappearance of the one burdened with sin, from the world from here. The world must see that the sin brings the death. Since this life, the man must learn that the sin receives the punishment of the death with regularity without any exception. The refusal of the communion with the fellow human it is a torment. The refusal of the communion with God it is the torment brought to the last conclusion: the death. God has placed this order not arbitrarily, but according to His being. He punishes with the abolishment on this plan seen and with the reducing to a tormented and distorted minimum, on the eternal plan, of the one who exited the communion with Him.

The punishment is a reaction against the egocentric hypertrophy manifested through the sin. It is a forced limitation from outside it. That is why, it is interweaved with pain. Under its blow, it manifests the fear of a damaging, of a shrinking, of a disappearance, eventually. But the punishment for the sin it must be, in fact, a total annulling of the sinner from the known way of life, into which the sin was committed.

The creature, which sinned against God, he must be abolished from the way of existence which the sin was committed in.

But the destruction cannot it be the last word of God, if we regard the death like an order left by Him for the sinner creature, or the sin cannot have the last word even if its presence causes the death. That is why, the death is a destruction only on the seen plan. God wants, in principle, the man to be saved. And the

salvation is accomplished through Jesus for the ones who adhere to Him. In this case, the existence of the man, instead of diminishing in the external plan, it reaches its plenitude. But on the plan from here, even if some people are liberated of sin and guilt, their being can no longer enjoy the plenitude, no matter how much their being is renewed through Jesus Christ. Their being, in the same way like the one of the others, must pass through death. The sin, introduced into the human nature, it has produced into the human nature certain modifications, certain debility, which remains even when the sin was banished from it. The death remains also to the saved ones, with the meaning to make the human being to pass through a radical change of structure, produced through his total deepening into the eclipse of any existence, in order the existence from after that to have a totally new shape than the one from here, and to have been disappeared from the human nature everything that reminds of sin. The moment of the death, like a pause, like a total interruption, like a full ceasing of the actuality of the subject, like a deepening of him into the depth of the virtuality, it is a moment of mysterious elaboration of the new being on the eternal plan. On this moment of deepening it happens to the human subject, like in a mysterious and creative retort, that divine work of transformation, of new structuring. It is a deepening into the hand of God, from Whom emerged the first existence. After the transformative pause, the man wakes up to the new existence, a happy and plenary one.

The death, even if it is followed by a tormented existence, or by a happy one onto another plan, according to how the man is not forgiven, or it is forgiven by God, it has, in any case, a connection with the universal-human sin, and it is the fate of every man after the sin has entered the world. It is an element of the historical structure, in which the

human life develops after the sin. Through this we do not want to say that the history itself started through a sin and that, consequently, to its definition belong, necessarily, the sin and the death. This thesis is sustained by the dialectic Protestant theology¹⁷⁰, and from the Catholics, for example, by Oskar Bauhofer¹⁷¹. The fact is that the history, in its actual structure, it has the death like a necessary element (Ro. 5: 12). This axiom is due to the fact that everybody who is born into history on a natural way, he inherits the hereditary sin. Nobody is born without sin and nobody escapes death amongst the ones who emerge in history through the natural concurs of its factors. Any man is, immediately after he is born, a candidate to death (*Sein zum Tode*), by the fact that the death is a result of the sin. Any natural man enters the history through the gate of the sin and exits it through the gate of the death. The Orthodox faith differs, though, from the Protestant one, henceforth, because it doesn't draw out of these elements the conclusion that it is not possible to live without sin, that the historical life and the sin are one. It is true that the natural entrance into history it is done through the gate of the sin and it is also true that the living through the exclusive powers of the history it is a living into sin, but it is not excluded the entrance into history on a way which comes from above, neither is excluded the living into history through the help of some powers from God. Jesus Christ, by being the Son of God, born like man through the work of the Holy Ghost, He is a proof to this. The existence of the saints is another proof. The Protestants deny the possibility of the holiness, and on

¹⁷⁰ E. Brunner, *Der Mittler*, p. 516: „Die Geschichte beginnt ert den Toren des Paradiesses, als da unter dem Fluch des Todes und des Gesetzes stehende Leben“. See also W. Künet, *Die Lehre des Sünde*, Gütersloh, Bertelsmann, 1927.

¹⁷¹ “Das Geheimnis der Zeiter”, München, 1935: “Todverfallenheit heist Geschichtlichkeit”, p. 70.

Jesus Christ, when they do not make Him exclusively man, they place Him into supra-history. The Catholic Bauhofer places Christ, also, into supra-history, for the reason that He had no sin and He should not die, though, at least in what regards the sin, he recognizes the reality of the holiness into history.

But a signification of the embodiment of the Son of God it is that He has sanctified the history, that He has made the history a possible frame for a life without sin. For this, He fully entered the history. But, in the same time, through the assistance which He promised to His followers, He has shown that only through power from above it is possible to live into history without sin. He has broken the borders of the history seen like a river which flows into the tube of the natural. It is possible to live the history in communion with the heavens. The death, though, it remains into the human being even to the ones who are living so. The proof it is the fact that Jesus has taken the death upon Himself. But, in His case the death is not interwoven with a personal sin. It remains like a solidarity in sufferance, with the history like a whole, with the history's sin, like the supreme gesture of assuming the responsibility for others. So that, the death remains, actually, like an element of the actual structure of the history and who dies he gives the supreme proof of his identification to the history, a proof of his character as a historical being.

In the case of Jesus Christ, it is right that the death was voluntarily, while to the other people is inevitable, even if they were liberated of sin. It would be possible to say that, for the death is not necessary to His person, His death was not a part of the structure of the history. But to Jesus the whole identification to the history it has a voluntary character. He has impropriated all the acts and the passions which are necessarily related to the living into history. But it was a voluntarily identification, of an ultimate ethical nobility. It is true that Jesus could to not die, but if He

hadn't died, how would have been His mission, how would have Him played the role which He has played into history, by identifying Himself to the history? Jesus cannot be thought except like One Who had to die. His being didn't imply the death in a necessary way, but His mission did. If His being had implied the death as necessity, His identification to the history would not have been voluntarily and His mission would not have been accomplished. Jesus had to die, not through being, but through mission. The necessity of His death went not from the involuntarily fatality of the nature, but through His supreme spiritual-ethic height. At Jesus it stands out on the first plan the will of His identification to the history, but the identification is entirely through will¹⁷².

So, He fulfilled also the condition required by the structure of the history; but He also fulfilled the request that this act to have a character of ethical

¹⁷² "The death wasn't to Jesus Christ inevitable, like it is to any man", "As free of the ancestral sin, Jesus was free also of the death under the godlike punishment. But His humanity had not the positive power of the immortality, and neither Adam had it until the falling into sin. Thereby, the death of Jesus is the inevitable consequence of the enmity of the ruler of this world towards Him. But this forced death and, natural in this sense, by penetrating directly into the fullness of His life, it was all the more tormenting than any other natural death" (Bulgakov, w. c. p. 403). Speaking about the voluntarily character of the death of Jesus, we are not arguing the impassibility of His humanity. This one was capable of death, like Great Athanasius said, but, though, it was not bearing the microbe of death in it, like the people who have come into world with the ancestral sin. "In order to pay to the death His tribute, He didn't taken from Himself, but from the others the occasion to bring His sacrifice; it was not possible to be sick, the Lord Who was healing the illnesses of the others, neither to come over His body a weakening, into which He was changing the weakness of the other into power". *Die Menschwerdung Gottes, Ausgewählt und Übertragen von L. A. Winterwyl*, Leipzig, 1937, p. 71, 74.

plenitude. And, as necessary, we can highlight the full identification of Jesus to the history, or the ethical fullness of His deed. Jesus was not a phantom of the history, because He could die and He actually died, but He neither was a created and naturally rolled over piece by the history, but the only being Who has totally identified Himself to the history, exclusively by will. He alone was only subject in history, even in sufferance, and by no means was Him an object.

So, He is fully into the history, but He is also fully above history. He let Himself to be ruled by history, but only because He wanted to master the history.

Referring again especially to the death, we can say that Jesus didn't die His own death. He didn't bear the death like a condemnation in Himself. Like He has taken it upon Himself the sin of the others. He couldn't have taken either the sin, or the death of the others, if He had borne His own sin and if He has suffered His own death. If He had been only a man, if He had came from the enchainment from beneath of the history and He hadn't been God and man in the same time, He couldn't have taken the two burdens of the man upon Himself in order to liberate the man of them. The historical life is escaped of sin like a necessary stigma, for Jesus came into history from outside history. And the death loses its connection with the sin into history for the same reason, for Jesus by coming from above history, He takes the evil things of the history in order to liberate the history of them. The possibility of the fulfillment of its true destiny it is won by the history only through the descending of the Son of God into history.

Jesus took upon Himself the death of the others for He took their sin. After being committed, the sin attracts the death. And for He took the sin of everybody, He took the death of everybody.

We have spoken about the sufferance of Jesus in

the Gethsemane garden, for the sins of all the people. Full sufferance is only that which ends in death. The profound pain for the sins of everybody and the sentiment of being forsaken by the Father, in other words the sufferance like a divine satisfaction of the godlike justice, in order to reach its ultimate degree, went all the way to death. The man Jesus, Who identified Himself to the entire humanity, over Whom was concentrated the whole human sin, He disappeared from on the plan of the life from here, and He endured the consequence of the total seen destruction in order the sin be destroyed. Into Him died the whole mankind in order the entire sin to disappear. Embodied into the order of the historical life and in solidarity with it, Christ endured the death in order to be shown that the man's life into history must to be destroyed, that the body must be abolished, in order to be expressed the destroying fatality brought by sin. The history died in Him, escaping, in the same time, the death and the power of the sin¹⁷³.

¹⁷³ It would seem that the death of each man, by being a punishment, and Jesus by representing all of us in death, He endured the death like a punishment. The death of Jesus can be considered, though, like a punishment only in a wider sense, like a consequence of the sin and that only because He stood in the place of all the people. Because this death is a personal act, and He was not guilty in fact, this death is a voluntary act of clean homage brought to God in order to counterbalance the sinful egotism of all the people. Jesus gives everything to God, including His life, because people refused to give something. The death of Jesus it is a full sacrifice, a perfect cult of God. The character of punishment of the death of Jesus it remains only like an echo, like a memory, like a faded feature, overwhelmed by its character of voluntary sacrifice. It is a punishment not because God-the Father, Himself, would bring the death upon Him, but because He let Christ to voluntarily take the painful consequences of the sin, ordered, of course, by the will of God. Only because the death reminds, by and large,

about the human sin, by being the sin's consequence, also the death of Jesus was a **sine qua non** condition for the escaping of the people, because it should be unconditionally endured in order God to forgive the people, it can be regarded also like a payment for sin. If the death of Jesus had been a punishment for the sin in a proper sense, it wouldn't have accomplished the salvation. The death of Jesus meets the death of the mankind, of the history, and His personal death for it. The first one it means punishment, but the second one cannot be a punishment, because He in only purity. The second one it means homage, sacrifice, and love towards God. The death like punishment, to Jesus, it is in fact a punishment in abstract, a punishment of the idea of sin. In concrete, though, the One who dies, being the embodied Son of God, He in not punished, but He brings homage to the Father like a right redemption for people. Watching at the death of Jesus, we are seeing our punishment and the sacrifice of His love and purity. The punishment is ours; His is the homage brought to God. Of course, the death of Jesus must be regarded also under another aspect. Because His descending into death was a necessary condition for the death to be defeated from inside towards outside, for His human nature, passed through death in a victorious way, in order to irradiate to the whole mankind the defeating of death's power, there is comprised a truth also into the theory of some Holy Fathers, that Jesus has surrendered from death in order to defeat death in its home. The two aspects do not stay in contradiction, but they can be regarded in a synthesis, as it has been already shown in the content of this work. Jesus, by dying, on one hand He fulfilled the godlike justice, and God didn't forgive the sin without this to be, in principle, sealed through death, and on the other hand, the sufferance to death is a spiritual power which the moral obduracy is broken through, namely the moral obduracy of the souls comprised by sin, and it is gives the human nature an ontological resistance in front of the spiritual death. Saint John Damascene wrote: "The death, by swallowing the body of the Lord, it was pierced by godhead like by a needle, like by a hook and, by tasting the immortal and life-maker body, itself has perished and has turned back everybody whom it swallowed before, for, like the appearance

Related to the death of Jesus are presented for being analyzed the following problems: 1) How has Him taken the death upon Himself, despite to not being a sinner, and, especially, how has Him taken the death of all the people? 2) What was His death constituted of, subjectively and objectively? 3) How has Jesus defeated the death?

The assuming of death, of the universal-human death, it is implied in the assuming of the sins of all the people. The death of Jesus was possible, because it was possible the assuming of the foreign sins. And He could receive the death because His human nature, even if it was not bearing in itself the germ of the death, it was capable of sufferance and death.

Jesus has made Himself man in order to enter the solidarity with the mankind, on the purpose to save the mankind. So, He has taken a human nature capable to die, even without personally sinning, but through the possibility to assume the universal-human sin. Taking this sin it was objectively producing the remoteness from God and the boldness of the satan to approach Him. Who can decipher the mystery of the assuming of the universal-human sin, with the effects it has produced into the conscience and into the structure of the humanity of Jesus? But some effects were produced. And they opened into His humanity the gate of the death. We said before that the ethical gesture of assuming the responsibility for the others it has its heroic and grave noblesse in the fact that it modifies realities of structure and relation.

The Self of Jesus, by placing Himself where it is

of the light it destroys the darkness, in the same way, through the touching of the life, it was banished the corruption the life appeared for everybody too, and there also appeared the destruction for the destroyer". The Dogmatic, Book III, Chapter 27.

meant to arrive every man when he descends into his intimacy, namely, in the true center of all the subjects, in the point of everybody's sensitiveness, the nonexistence which was advancing towards them, better said, like a organic consequence of the sin, He concentrated it towards Him. Jesus has placed Himself between mankind and death, or between the core of every human beings and the death, which surrounds them and penetrates them like a darkness of the nonexistence. Through sin, the initial nothingness receives again power upon the creation, following to the corruption of which this was infected, or better said, the creation started again towards the nothingness. And satan, who enjoys the futility of the God's work, he is in full work, pushing the creature towards there. The death is extinguishing, one after another, the ones who came to the existence.

But the complete extinguishing takes place only into the historical plan. Onto another plan it is kept a wreck from each spiritual being which existed, and God has established to be kept the trace of the creation like an eternal illustration of the tragic consequence of the remoteness from Him, but also like a proof that He does not want, in principle, the disappearance of what He has created. The sense of the death is that to be a punishment for the sinner man. But, if death had been the total disappearance of the man, it would have lost the sense of punishment because through it the man would have escaped the divine punishment. And, by knowing that he had escaped through death, he wouldn't have suffered either on earth of the fear of the eternal punishment¹⁷⁴.

¹⁷⁴ P. Althaus, *Die letzten Dinge*, Gütersloh, Bertelsmann, 1933, p. 104 – 105: „Im Tode erfahren wir Gottes Gericht. Das Gericht Gottes aber trägt in sich Unendlichkeit, Ewigkeit. Wäre der leibliche Tod das endgültige Ende, dann könnten wir dem Gerichte Gottes entfliehen in den Tod hinein. Das Erlöschen des Ichs wäre ein Ausweg aus der

Jesus, the Logos who defeated the nothingness at the creation, He has placed Himself again in front of the nothingness - this time not like a commanding subject, who scatters it away with His word, namely not like God Who isn't even for a moment the nothingness's servant, but like a man who, even if he has not personally committed any sin, he though bears the guilt of the human sins, and therefore like a victim, like an object meant to let itself to be surrounded, penetrated by nothingness. The Father let Him to be invaded by the entire nothingness, because, seeing Him identified to the human sin, the Father symbolizes, by this applying of the divine justice without any exception, the condemnation of sin of everybody. Satan pushes all the nothingness towards Him, blowing in its sails with all his adversity as much as he has against God, thorough its concentration into the hearts suffocated by hatred of the Hebrew Hierarchs and Pharisees.

The sensitiveness of Jesus, as big as that of all the people together, it could be deepened with thrilling into all the deepness of the nonexistence. He lived the death of everybody. The death or the nothingness being also the full absence of God and the maximum closeness of the evil one, Jesus tasted like no other man the dreadfulness of this perspective in its gradual accomplishing, until the moment of its fulfillment in death.

Let's not forget that He suffered all the things of the death with His humanity, and not with the godhead. And this was possible because He was restraining the godhead to exercise his power¹⁷⁵.

grenzenlosen Tiefe der Not, aus der unbedingten Verzweiflung... Der Tod ist bricht das Ende des Gerichtes, sondern ein Moment desselben“.

¹⁷⁵ **K. IÜSSEN**, in the w. c. p. 138, he gives from the doctrine of Hesychios from Jerusalem, referring to this point, the

Only if the victory of Jesus over the death it was the supreme straining of the human nature to definitively defeat the nothingness, His victory has destroyed the power of it forever, namely He produced in this nature a force categorically superior to the nothingness, which He can communicate to every man who enters the connection with Him.

The entire power of the nothingness, revitalized through sin, it crowded itself, therefore, upon Jesus, on one hand, through an objective movement, allowed by God and agitated by Satan, and on the other hand, through a subjective movement, through the entire mankind's sensitiveness, which Jesus had after He assumed through love of all the human sins.

But Jesus entered the report with the nothingness not like a commanding Logos, but like a man who receives it in Himself by the fact that He bears the everybody's sins, like a man decided to let His being to receive it in all its fullness, in order to be able to defeat it entirely. His spontaneous movement towards death no longer means that Jesus came out like a commanding one, in the way of the nothingness, like in the beginning of the creation, but that He placed Himself voluntarily, like a victim, in the path of the death, in order to defeat it not from exterior, like God, but from inside it, like man.

He didn't wear in Himself the germ of the death, thereby He shouldn't have died on the basis of an organic fatality. The death came to Him because He wanted it to come.

And just because, in the fact that the death didn't grow up from Him, that in Him there wasn't any

following quote: "The cross and the death He endured them like a helpless man, by not permitting to the angel to serve Him. He was restraining the power of His own godhead, in order to be fulfilled the prophesied mystery about the economy regarding Him".

weakness or any illness, it stays one of the circumstances that He tasted the death more than all the people. Though He didn't die His death, His death was more frightening than everybody's. The fact that the death came to Him from outside and He went towards death spontaneously, it gave a never reached intensity to the bitter experience. Like Oskar Bauhofer observed (*Das Geheimnis der Zeiten*), to the other people the death is a suffering, to Jesus is a deed, being freely chosen; or, His suffering is His deed. In the state of victim, upon whom advanced the death, He is though a subject. The sacrifice is in the same time the sacrificer. It is the utmost high manhood to not fall, when you are a sacrifice, in the state of an object, but to keep the character of a subject so full that to commit alone the whole operation of your own sacrifice. Only Jesus could meet these two qualities in a perfect way. We are giving, bellow, the word to Oskar Bauhofer, which highlights very well the difference of the death of Jesus from the one of other people:

“The death of Jesus is not less real, it is not less dreadful and frightening, for the reason that it was freely chosen and it was His deed. A contrary. Maybe, only Jesus could endure the death in all its pure measure, only Him could be lived it, and experienced it – we are using this paradoxical word for the enduring of the death – in all the emptiness of its substance. We must admit, for internal reasons (a proof it could not be brought), that people do not fully endure the death, and much less they really experience the death. The bigger the struggle and the torment of a moribund are, the more the pain overwhelms itself and it quenches through itself. This is a merciful order from God... because we are not capable to endure the dreadfulness of the death. The death is placed on our shoulder, but actually we do not meet the death... We, the people, are falling under the power of the death, the death knocks us down to the ground. Christ, though, He stepped in

front of the death, He met the death per se. He wasn't knocked down to the ground and He wasn't laid on the ground, by death. He died upraised. This is the cross... The senses and the soul of Christ weren't - in this suffering - darkened and disturbed, but, if we can say so, they were kept in maximum awakening and capacity of sufferance"¹⁷⁶.

But, let's not forget even for a moment that Jesus didn't stay in this watchfulness like the one who fights the death, trying to banish the death away, and to get rid of death. He is not a subject who fights the death, but a subject who endures the death, a subject in a role of an object, of a victim, of a sacrifice. If He wanted to defeat the nothingness through activism, He would work like Logos, but in such a case He would not save the man on the inside. By placing Himself like a man in report with His death, He behaved like a man who bears upon him the sin, and He didn't want to multiply it by refusing the sanction, but He wanted to expiate it by voluntarily receiving the death. Though He didn't commit any personal sin, His death was the only one endured in the most possible voluntary way. If the death had defeated Him while fighting it, it would have been easier to Him to endure the death. In the middle of the activism, the sensitivity gets a little blunt. On the other hand, if He had fought the death, and though He had died, the death would have been stronger than Him. And if He had defeated the death, and He hadn't died, then He would have not endured all the condemnation for the sins and He wouldn't have tasted to the end the sufferance and this victory wouldn't have been actually a victory, because it isn't possible to

¹⁷⁶ W. c. p. 106-107. Moberly says: "Let's remember, in the light of the familiar experience, that in the person of Jesus from Nazareth, like the harmony of the bodily life it was unique in its perfection, likewise the sensitiveness in report with the sufferance and the humiliation under helplessness, they were unique" (p. 114).

speak about victory over the death until the death has not become a reality.

Through the man the nothingness received again power over the Universe; through the man the nothingness must be defeated. Through the man the creation became extremely weak and vulnerable towards the nothingness or it received an unrestrained inclination towards nothingness. Through the man and into the man there should be reconfirmed the nature into existence, it should be made again firm and resilient in front of nothingness, and it should be healed of weakness and of the inclination towards the nothingness. But this strength the man should gain it by confronting the nothingness, in the whole force it has.

The simple man, though, he would not be able to defeat the nothingness. In front of it, there must stay the Logos like man, in order to save the man. Like man, to be in the attitude of receiving the death in all its power, and not by removing it from distance, but like a man worn by the Logos, for having the power to endure it in such a way than to defeat it.

It seems that we stay here in front of the greatest paradox: Jesus should to endure the death, for, on one hand, to taste the sufferance to the end and to give Himself wholly to God, for counterbalancing the worldly egotism and for satisfying the divine justice, and, on the other hand, to strengthen from inside the human nature in report with the death by fully enduring it. Consequently, it seems that He should receive a victory of death over Him, in order to gain His own victory over death. Is His death a victory over the death and a victory of the death in the same time?

We told that the death is, on one hand, a maximum surrounding through the nothingness driven by the evil one, and, on the other hand, a forsaking from God's part, a cutting off the connection of the created life with God. They are two aspect of the same reality. But

no man, while dying, he fully looks at this terrifying event. "The essentiality of the death, like sum and existential fulfillment of estrangement from God and of being forsaken by Him, it is not possible to be experienced in man, in its purity". Christ, though, He lived this dreadfulness of death to its very end. His shout: "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" it is not only a physical reaction, but it is the expression of the full sight of this abyss of the death, like only Christ could experience and endure. Only He endured the death to its final limit, the death by excellence (Bauhofer, p. 108-109). He endured it to its very end, to its expiration. Only in this way He showed the whole power to endure.

But what consisted His power over the death of, given the fact that it ended into the mortal expiration?: into the absolute surety, that the nothingness and the forsaking by God, namely the death, they didn't have the last word. Though He looked with lucidity, like no one else, at the fearsome abyss of the nothingness and of being forsaken by God, He never doubted. He lived the death in all its vastness and deepness, but He was not spiritually overwhelmed, not even for an instance, by death. He looked in death's eyes and subdues the death. The death couldn't touch His spirit. The power of the nothingness and of the forsaking by God, they were not only an object of contemplation to Jesus, but they took place with the whole their terrifying efficiency. This is the signification of the real death, of the stopping of the body functions, and of the separation of the soul from the body. The work of destroying of the historical life of Jesus through the power of the nothingness, it was so intense that even the Cosmos felt it. "(Mt. 27: 45) Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour". The nature fell back into that darkness from the beginning of the world; it was on the point to be swallowed again by nothingness. The nothingness

was allowed to fight the being, with the whole its power, in order the victory to be decided in fair fight. The luck was that, in the name of the being, there stepped into the arena the man with the heavenly hypostasis, receiving to fight the nothingness. And when the nothingness reached its maximum efficiency over Jesus, when He yielded the ghost, the earth was shaken, the veil was torn apart, and the stones split.

It is shown in this event both the solidarity of the Cosmos with Jesus¹⁷⁷, Who has made Himself the heart of the world, through love, and like man, after He was creator like Logos, but it is shown also the supreme tension of the nothingness to roll away, through Jesus, the entire Cosmos into that chaos from before creation. In fact, if had been able to defeat even Him, if neither Him like man had been able to resist the nothingness, there wouldn't have been any hope for the creation. In the name of the mankind, Jesus faced the whole pressure of the nothingness, and He endured the whole pain of the presence of the nothingness, and He gained the victory, namely a power which stretches out of Him in the whole human nature¹⁷⁸.

¹⁷⁷ "The sun darkened, because of not suffering to see God mocked", Antiphon 10, voice VI, from the service of the Holy Passion from Thursday evening. The churchly songs give, mostly of the time, like a reason for this shacking of the creation in the moment of the crucifixion of God, the fear which engulfed all the creatures because of seeing the Master nailed on the cross. But, because they cannot have a personal fear, we believe that it is about a solidarity, one somehow organic, between the creation and Jesus. When He trembles because of the torment of the death, through all them it passes the cold shiver of the death. "Every creature was changed by fear, seeing You, Christ, nailed of the cross. The sun darkened and the grounds of the earth were shaken. All of them suffered together with You, the One Who has built all them".

¹⁷⁸ But this crisis, in which the creation is thrown for a moment, it has also a different significance. Like the death of Jesus

Being about the fight between the nothingness and the mankind like a spiritual entity, this fight is decided in spirit. Though it operates also through the pressure and through the extinguishing of the bodily life, the victory is won by the nothingness when it makes the spirit to kneel in the whirl of the terrible pain and sentiments of the end. Jesus experienced by the biggest pain that can be imagined and He experienced His ending gradually and the total forsaking by God. But until the moment which the conscience extinguishes in Him, He didn't hesitate in the certitude that His death will last and He will pass to the Father. "Father, into Your hands I entrust my ghost", said Christ in the vicinity of the moment which ended His life from here. And before that, He said to the thief: "Today you shall be in heaven with me". This certitude is in the same time a confidence in the Father and, likewise, the supreme homage, the supreme cult which He brought to the Father. His death was the full sacrifice like a cult brought to God¹⁷⁹.

represents the necessity of all the people to die after the sin, likewise the darkening and the shaking of the world from the moment of the crucifixion of God it shows that the will of God is not with this form of the Cosmos confused by sin, and once it ill be truly passed through the catastrophe of the end. On the other hand, as the death of Jesus is not a definitive death, a death like an ultimate goal, but it is a passing through towards the revival, a means of exiting the sphere of the death in which is the life into body, in the same way the shaking on the moment of the crucifixion, which must be repeated in the life of every man, like a participation to the death of Jesus, it is followed by a surplus of life, by a rebirth even in the life from here.

¹⁷⁹ A. D. SCHLATTER, *Jesu Gottheit und das Kreuz*, p. 61 and the followings: „To die believing, it means to affirm God like God in the moment of the ceasing of the being; it means to praise His love and His gift, when everything is taken from us, even our being. This belief has a great measure and brightness, because it hasn't a seeing like a support, it is not helped by an experience, it is not possible a

In this way, His death is not accomplished like an extinguishing of the conscience, except for a moment, so much as it was necessary for its tasting to the culminant moment and for the showing of His power to the end. Its culmination coincides to the victory over it. Not touching His spirit, not weakening it to Him, the syncope of the conscience into death it does not last and it does not go with His spirit awakened, to continue a tormented existence, like the other people do. "(Acts. 2: 27) Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell".

Jesus rises up immediately from the moment of the extinguishing of His historical life into the life of on the other plan of existence. The death is defeated on the moment which it thought that it has won, "(Acts. 2: 24) (...) because it was not possible that he should be held of it."

The death of Jesus meant, thereby, the victory over the death¹⁸⁰.

substantiation from the own life, because it looks exclusively towards God, and exclusively into Him it has its reason... By the fact that we collapse into nothingness without falling from God, we sanctify His name. The death like an occasion of a incomparable faith, it provides us the possibility of a divine service (Gottesdienst), which cannot be compared to anything we are doing while we live. But only to Jesus the death was a total voluntary self-giving and not only a passive one. "Upon this giving of Jesus it can be applied, without any diminishing, the notion of «cult», of «sacrifice». Only into His self giving of towards the Father, the idea of sacrifice reaches its full reality. In the passiveness of the resignation, it still doesn't exist any cult. This is a deed... The sacrifice is the gift given by God." (p. 67)

¹⁸⁰ The philosopher Martin Heidegger, in his famous analysis of the human being, he has reduced the core of the human being to "worry". Through worry, the man is always before himself, to the future possibilities. But the most characteristic possibility, the absolutely inevitable possibility, is the death. The thought at death it makes the

man to gather himself into his ultimate intimacy. This thought makes him to be in a state of continuous reconciliation with the death (die vorlaufende Entschlossenheit). Through this assertive state of reconciliation, of the man detaches himself from the merging into mass, gaining his own intimacy of rough singularizing. But out of all this, like Binswanger observed, it turn out that state of intimacy is determined by the flickering of the nothingness and, at its turn, it is the point which gives the clearest perspective over the nothingness from the end. The man, like “worry” it is surrounded on all the parts by nothingness (“Die Sorge ist in ihren Wegen durch von Nichtigkeit durchsetzt”. (Sein und Zeit, p. 285). And Binswanger, w. c. p. 139 says: “... ist ersichtlich, von wo aus Heidegger das Sein negiert und den Sein der Nichtigkeit bestimmt: **vom eigentlichen Selbstsein aus**. Dieses ist das positive, von dem aus das ihm Entgegengesetzte sich als Nichtigkeit erweist.“). Binswanger shows though, that the man-worry, who in the better case reaches the consequent line to the man who lives in the centre of his intimacy, it is not found but like a case almost ill, of egotism. More or less, the man is also love. And the love provides its intimacy too. In love, though, the man is no longer obsessed with death; he does not care of it anymore, because he is no longer alone. In these findings is content, we think, the germ of an understanding of the substitutive death of Jesus Christ, like also of His personal victory over death. Jesus places Himself in the middle of a mankind weakened to death by the thought to the death, because of the egotistic grinding. He found Himself, amongst people who were in this state, also alone. His loneliness, of course, it was a voluntary one, because voluntarily He made Himself man, by descending into the wilderness among the people thickened into egotistic and worried monads. This loneliness intensified around Him in Gethsemane garden, when He found out how little He can lean on the man. The loneliness produces the sadness into soul and it opens to the death the gate into the human nature. His loneliness, like forerunner of the death, Jesus didn't feel it because of the sin, of His egotism, but because of the sin of the people. The loneliness like a point of meeting eye to eye with the death, it made Him to see the death, to be

The sufferance of Jesus, by coming from the gradual extinguishing of His historical human life, it should go to the end in order to melt down the human sin into the human life. The divine justice allowed His historical life to be destroyed through death, because of His life represented the historical life of the humanity. Only in this way it was possible to be shown the condemnation and the abolition of the sin, because it was destroyed the person who accumulated it upon Himself.

But any other man, who bears the sin upon him, he bears it like a perpetrator, he is sinful like subject, like source of last self determination of him. So, the death, by not being but the consequence of the sin, it grows up to any other man from the human subject himself, who is gradually weakened and who succumbs grinded by it, and not having the power to confront it, to resist it. Jesus, though He was identified to the sin of all the people, He was not, though, the perpetrator of the sin. The sin was coming over Him from outside; the sin was not springing from inside Him. It is different when you bear something, from when that something is springing

shaken by death, but not permanently, because the death was not growing from inside Him, except in the Gethsemane garden, until He inwardly defeated, through His restless love for people, the discouragement of the loneliness. He defeated the loneliness thickened around Him by all the people, through the love which was though able to pass through death for them, also pulling them off from the loneliness. He didn't feel the nothingness surrounding Him but for an instant, for it was not into Him the sin like cause of isolation and like cause of the fear of death. He was full of love and surrounded into the love of the Father, Who sent Him into world and Who was waiting for Him at the end of His earthly life. And the love, like a surety of the existence, it defeats the fear and it defeats the death.

from inside you. In the first case, it is kept a certain distinction between your subject, like the last source of your own existence, and that something that you are bearing. The sin that was not sprung from the deepness of the subject of Jesus, it was not fructifying there the gradual weakening which leads to death. The death came upon Him from outside, like the sin had been done too. So it is explainable why His subject kept the vigor for confronting the death, and He didn't fall, weakened, under the death, what would have meant in the first place a moral weakening, a hesitation of the confidence¹⁸¹. Upon the One without personal sin, the death has not a power of a definitive swallowing, no matter how totally the death would have concentrated upon Him. This was the situation of Jesus. The death surrounded Him and conquered Him like an object. But also in the last moment of the death passing upon Him, Jesus did not fall inside from the state of a subject, He did not renounce to be a subject, He did not become an object, no matter how much the death tried to make Him like that. The death unfolded all its powers, it did Him what it does to any other man, and He allowed the death objectively do everything to Himself. But He remained subject until the death set arbitrarily upon Him.

The death won in the sight, experimentally. But its victory was not real, because He didn't give up, even for a moment. The death has done everything it could, but it ended exhausted and defeated.

Thereby, He defeated the death, like man. He could defeat the death because He didn't run from death even for a moment, and He received the death without a personal sin, with full confidence in the Father. The fully voluntary receiving of the death and the lack of

¹⁸¹ **B. STEFFEN**, *Das Dogma vom Kreuz*, Gütersloh, 1920, p. 117: „Jesu hat nicht die Verdammnis der **Sünder**, sondern die Verdammnis der Sünde erfahren. So blieb seine Persönlichkeit mitten in Gericht doch selig“.

sin, they belong together. But, in order the man Jesus to be capable of this, He had a divine hypostasis. His power to win like a man all the rushing in of the nothingness, it came to Him, in the last analysis, from His divine hypostasis. His capacity to receive and to endure the death of everybody, it is one with His capacity of love, of human form but of divine proportions, towards people, which He identified Himself to, also in front of the Father, and about Whom He never doubted, not even when He was totally forsaken.

The love made Him die; the love gave Him the victory over death. The love is the only power which the soul defeats the death through. The love sustains the undiminished life in the soul, because it keeps the soul in connection with God and with the fellow humans, and it maintains the confidence in God. While the love is in him, he does not hesitate, he does not weaken. Attributing, to the love of Jesus, the power to be defeat the death, we are not contradicting the affirmation from above, that He defeated the death through the lack of sin, because the lack of the sin is not possible without a perfect love. But, having the perfect love like a man amongst people, it meant in the same time the assuming of everybody's sins, and to go to death for them. Through the same divine force of the love, Jesus is without sin and impoverished by the sins of everybody, He receives voluntarily the death and He defeats her. Through the same divine force of the love, Jesus is without sin and He is burdened with everybody's sins, and He voluntarily receives the death and He defeats it.

Insisting in not hesitating love towards the Father, though the death can arbitrarily pass upon Him, He remains, to the last moment, a full and undiminished subject. A real victory of the death over Him, it would have taken place only if He had diminished under the death pressure, if He had given

and if He had allowed to be spiritually overwhelmed.

Though, the arbitrary passing of the death over Him, it brought Him to the state of ceasing the bodily functions and of ceasing the conscience. But, that took place unjustly. It was not a legitimate victory of the death. That is why "(Acts. 2: 24) Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be held by it."

In what sense must we understand that, through the victory upon the death, the death was crushed for all the people? Oskar Bauhofer speaks about a metaphysical power of the death, which Jesus has broken, because He lived it, inside Him, to the end. "From the enduring of the death in its entirety, it follows directly that, through this, the death's power was defeated... The death, lived in its plenitude by Christ, it is one with the victory over the metaphysical power of the death" (p. 109). Somehow, the whole death has exhausted in itself while trying to get Christ under its control and in the His victory upon it. This idea is characteristic especially to the Holy Greek Fathers.

But the death must not be understood like a self standing reality, which can be defeated into a huge clashing, so that it can't come again upon the people.

The death is the expression of a relation which three factors enter: God, the man, and the satanic force of the evil¹⁸². The death means the final end of a

¹⁸² **B. STEFFEN**, W. C. P. 114: "Man ist heute so sehr bemüht die «dingliche» Versöhnungslehre zu überwinden. Da soll man auch den Mut haben den persönlichen Feind Jesu beim rechten Namen Zu nennen, anstatt ihn auf das Dingliche zu reduzieren... Wehen unsre Zeit «den Bösen» durch «das Böse» zu ersetzen bestrebt ist, dann wird sie der Realität des Bösen einfach nicht gereicht. Mit dem unpersönlichen Bösen lässt sich spielen, mit dem persönlichen nicht. Das Unpersönliche kann beiseite geschoben oder idealistisch in ein Michls aufgelöst werden,

progressive weakness of the man, in the first place in his spiritual being, and then bodily. But this weakness is organically tied to the sin and the sin is the remoteness from God, Who is the spring of life. In the same time, this remoteness is a closeness to the personal and satanic source of the evil, or it is caused also through an attraction of that one.

The escaping of the human nature from death, it is not obtained through a victory over the death taken like a self standing dragon, neither through a hardening of this nature taken in itself, but through the definitive consolidation of the human nature into the closeness of God and into the remoteness from the evil one, by removing of the sin.

After the victory of Christ over the death, the man, who enters, through faith, the range of His power, he no longer dies, for, on one hand, through the sacrifice of Christ, the universal sin received the fatal blow and His humanity has gain the supremacy over the death, and on the other hand, for, on the basis of a new connection, a tighter one, between Himself and the mankind, on the basis of the love emerged from Him and of the faith awakened to the people through His resurrection, the state of supremacy over death, accomplished into the humanity of Christ, it is conveyed to the people too. Not through a simple changing of juridical report between God and man, the man doesn't die anymore, but through the creation of a new power into the mankind, on the basis of the victory of Jesus over the death. But we must not forget that this new situation was accomplished by the will of

das Persönliche dagegen besitzt irrationale Tatsächlichkeit. Mit dem Unpersönlichen wird man schnell fertig, sobald man sich auf die eigene Persönlichkeit und ihre Überlegenheit über alles Unpersönliche besonnen hat; das persönliche Böse dagegen Tritt unserer Persönlichkeit bestimmend gegenüber und kann sie in eine Knechtschaft zwingen, an die unsre Persönlichkeit einfach zugrunde gehen kann“.

God, together with the fulfillment of the moral law. The new power into the mankind it consists of the intimate closeness to God, through Jesus Christ. The victory over the “metaphysical power” of the death, it is actually a victory of the spirit into man, through the Ghost of Jesus, a metaphysical-spiritual strengthening of the human nature, the winning of indestructibility through spiritual communion with the humanity of Christ.

Why couldn't have taken place this closeness – one defeating of sin and of death - between people and Christ, before His death?

Because, like we already highlighted, it was necessary a sufferance which to produce a shaking from its basis, of the human thickened nature, a shaking imposed by the ontological laws, by the divine order, and passed into the being of every man when he comes close to Christ Who died for him. It was necessary a death which to be equivalent to their death, lived also by them in the whole its potential, without, though, to abolish them. But, through the same death, through which it was “satisfied” an ontological necessity indicated by the divine being and established by the divine will at the creation, it was produced into the humanity of Jesus Christ that new factor which to create between Him and people that closeness victorious upon death, or, in the frame of this closeness existing also through His embodiment, the power of this victory. The sacrifice of Jesus it was, through the satisfying itself, of an ontological order, of mortal “shaking”, but though, a “creator again” of the decay creation, the supreme revealing of the fire of the divine love, which has thawed the consciences under its blaze. And the resurrection created into people the basis of the faith for their awakened love towards Jesus Christ-God, through His sacrifice. Like the sufferance to death was necessary for the humanity of Jesus to gain the victory upon death, likewise the “mortal”

shaking of the man, occasioned by the sacrifice of Christ, it was necessary in order to him be able to receive the victorious upon death power, from Christ, the resurrected One.

A number of contemporary researchers, by observing some spiritual phenomena, they have drawn the conclusion that the body is not a fully adequate environment, which our spiritual life to manifest through, but it is a "limit and a barrier". Out of this conclusion they have pulled out a powerful argument for the immortality of the soul. We present, according to mister Ion Petrovici, an exposure of these phenomena and of the conclusion derived from them¹⁸³. "On the deep plan of our memory there exists the totality of our memories, but they are not actualized in the conscience all in the same time, but as more as our cerebral mechanism allows it, which always – even when functions perfectly – sorts, one by one, our memories, by letting to pass into the conscience only the ones which are useful in that moment and to our individual preservation. (Anybody can imagines what danger would represent to this preservation, the simultaneous invasion into the conscience of all our memories!). When the problem of the preservation – which interests especially our cerebral mechanism – it eventually isn't put anymore, then this apparatus of selection does not function anymore, the dam breaks and the whole deposit of our memories overflowed into the conscience. Bergson brings, in this regard, an impressive example: the people who were on the point to drown themselves, they tell us that, on the moment which they have lost their conscience, they had the integral vision of their life, the complete kaleidoscope of all their memories".

Another domain, which shows that the body is a

¹⁸³ "Beyond Horizon", in *"The Thought"*, September, 1939.

limit, an impediment to the full manifestation of our spirit, it is that one of the rationality. The shapes of the rationality succeed to embrace and to organize somewhat the field of the sensitive world, but into a very incomplete way. "A partial matching between our spirit and the sensitive world, of course there exists, but there's not a perfect superposition. Our spirit cannot accomplish his fundamental exigencies in the surrounding world, and his shapes seem like heterogenic frames, which are clumsily and imperfectly applied. For sure, not this world is his natural arena, but he has the right to wait for another world, into which to fully and happily accomplish himself".

At least in the domain of the sentiment, the love cannot be completely accomplished due to the corporal separation. The complete union is impeded by the wall of the body. The heroes of Wagner: Tristan and Isolde, from too much love, they shatter their bodily covers, to no longer be impeded from the perfect union.

"But the body is an obstacle even to reentering to yourself. Because the body attracts us towards the outside world and it locks us to the window of the external enchantment, we have only unclear clues about the depths of our inside, which we cannot perceive but vaguely and superficially".

According to the expression of J. Chevalier, it exists in this problem a compensatory equilibrium. All the spiritual virtualities, not actualized into the interweaving of the life from here, they would have to manifest in the future life, when it will disappear the narrowing frame of the body. "The narrowed spirit in his manifestation, and choked in the numerous important virtualities, it is impossible not to be destined to another existence too, which to find a more adequate instrument to entirely accomplish himself into, drawing out from their shadow a number of virtualities which cannot be captured with the means of the earthly life".

These phenomena and the arguments derived out of them, for the immortality of the soul, they give us, though, if they are looked at thoroughly, an answer also to the question about the power which the Resurrected Jesus gives it to all people who believe in Him, for their victory over death, a power which means, in fact, the victory of the Savior over the metaphysical root of the death. In the first place, we must observe that the narrowing of the spiritual life is not due only to the body, but also to the causes of moral order. There are people in the heads of whom there cannot entered any admitting of some realities and spiritual mysteries, because they are dominated by a passionate stubbornness. To the others, those mysteries are quite obvious. The love and the forbearance towards the other, they multiply in an overwhelming measure their knowledge. This means, even if their body disappears, like one of the impediments to the full actualization of our spirit, it doesn't disappear also the shell of moral nature, the life of the soul, after death, it doesn't reach the entire amplitude, which is given in its virtualities. And the removal of this moral shell cannot be produced through an arbitrary external act, but only through the will of the man, who in the moment of his death he can no longer manifest himself and, so, if the man hasn't got rid of before his death, it will compel him after the detachment from his body. No matter how vast had been the range of knowledge, of judgments, of memories and sentiments, on which, not being able to actualize the man in this life, he would have been unfolded in the future one, it will bear in each individual a different seal, similar to the one which his spiritual life wore while it was into body. At one, the whole this life moves on the surface, it is vast, but shallow. To some domains of spiritual order, the man who is like that, he manifests a categorical incapacity. Another man tastes, incompletely, but so far satisfactorily, even from here, the joy of some

knowledge, intuitions, and understanding, which refer to realities from above the category of the matter, space, and geometrically thinking reason. The difference is due to some causes of moral order. Thereby, who leaves this life with the burden of the sin, with the entire exit from the walls of the body, he won't experience but only of an extensive widening of his spiritual life, essentially identical to the one from here, but not also a penetration onto a superior plan, a spiritual one. His soul has died since He still was in this life and the bodily death won't liberate him of this spiritual death, but, on one hand, he will finalize it, and, on the other hand, by no longer existing the body, which to find some joys into sin, he will make it more tormenting.

To the eruption of his spirit into an incomparable ampler a more happier life, he cannot be partaker but the one who left from here without sin, and who, consequently, communicated while still in the body, in a certain way, with the realities according to the spirit. The first one Who left from here without any sin, and the only one Who hadn't any trace of sin, was Jesus Christ. His life from here was not narrowed by body, neither by sin. That is why, immediately that He escaped the body, the powers of His spirit – we are talking here about the human spirit – gushed in deepness and vastness into a measure which we not even can imagine. Thereby, His death was, in the same time, the supreme sufferance for the human sin, and also the only one gate through which entered the life of full greatness, the life in the Johannine meaning of the word. The moment of the death coincides to the moment of the outbreak of His full life.

Now it becomes clear the answer to the question of how Jesus defeated, through His death, the metaphysical power of the death, in the other words, how has He transmitted, after His death, power to all the people who believe in Him, in order to defeat the

death. The indestructibility of the human nature it cannot be explained except through a communication of it with a human nature which has raised itself upon the history, untouched by death, and it is near to the transcendent spring of the divine, eternal, and fresh life.

But this answer stays in connection also with the Resurrection of Jesus, which is preceded by His descent to hell.

X. THE KINGLY DIGNITY OF JESUS CHRIST

X. 1. The Descent to Inferno

The royal dignity of Jesus Christ has manifested also while He lived the earthly life, through the authority which was emanating from Him, through the wonders He did and through the acts of power through which He gave forgiveness of the sins or through which He established the future organization of His church. But, in a principal way, this divinity manifested into the victory over the death, through the descent to hell, and into resurrection, in the placing of Himself on the right side of the Father, from where He directs the work of salvation, and in the final judgment.

The resurrection is preceded by the descent to hell. According to the doctrine of the Orthodox Church, the resurrection belongs to the royal dignity¹⁸⁴. The old Protestantism considered the resurrection like belonging also to the hierarchal ministry¹⁸⁵. Jesus

¹⁸⁴ **H. ANDRUTSOS**, *The Dogmatic*, Sibiu, 1930, p. 230.

¹⁸⁵ At the Orthodox believers this theory is sustained by Sergei Bulgakov, w. c. p. 406, though it is not explained and it is not

would have descended to hell in order to continue His sufferance also for the ones from there. Because the last step of the torments it is the one from hell, Jesus would have endured those torments too, on the basis of His will to identify Himself to the whole human pain¹⁸⁶.

But the will of the Orthodox Church to relate the descent to hell to the royal dignity it has profound significations. As even some Protestants notice, Jesus couldn't go into hell to continue the sufferance because the torments of the hell are constituted from sufferance interweaved with the persistence into sin. They are the eternity of the vicious circle, and of the punishment for the sin, and of the revolt against the punishment. Only who didn't leave from here purified through the efforts of his will and who stepped like so into eternity, he entered, *eo ipso*, the hell. Jesus didn't die for the sin. The Protestant B. Steffen says: "Obeys himself the inferno only who obeys the sin like a sinner"¹⁸⁷. And Dorner declares: "Christ could not support the torment of the hell, because they belong to their eternity and, due to the unchangeable character, the unhappiness of the despair"¹⁸⁸. The victory of Jesus over the death it is real only in the case when the death cannot hold Him even for an instant, in its possession. The descent into hell, in order to suffer the torments from there, it would mean the death took Him into its mastery like on any other sinful man. When we say the death didn't lay its mastery on Him, we understand that the

based this affirmation except on the general observation that "the sacrifice of Christ unveils through this its power not only in life, but also through death, into grave".

¹⁸⁶ **B. STEFFEN**, w. c. p. 116: "Die (protestantische) Orthodoxie behauptet, unser Heil sei davon abhängig dass Jesus die Höllenstrafen, also das genaue Äquivalent die Sünde der Menschen, erlitten habe".

¹⁸⁷ W. c. p. 116.

¹⁸⁸ At B. Steffen, c. p.

detachment of the soul from the body it didn't mean to Him a continuation of the sufferance, a continuation in a diminished existence, but it meant an outburst of the spirit in the whole plenitude of His powers. In the moment in which "(1 Pt. 3: 18) (...) being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit", and so He descended into hell, like also the churchly songs tell us.

We do not know, in a clear manner, all the reasons which Jesus has descended into hell for, if He didn't do it in order to endure the pains from there. Because the victory over death coincided to the receiving of the death, for, thereby, the resurrection like fact into deepness and into spirit it happened into the moment of the death and the death is the premise for the resurrection of the body, this resurrection with the body could have been done immediately after death. But, probably, for His death not to appear like illusory to the people, He left His body to lie in grave for three days, and meanwhile He descended with the soul into hell.

Leaving the body into grave and living for three days only through the soul, Jesus wanted to teach, on the other hand, that it is possible a spiritual life, a victorious and happy one, even without body¹⁸⁹. Until Him, everybody left the body and went to the tormented existence from hell, because all of them were passing the threshold of the eternity with their spirit disfigured by sin. These three days of life of Jesus, with His soul separated from His body, they form the beginning and the condition of the happy existence of the souls of the righteous, until their resurrection with the bodies. The fact itself that Jesus was the first One Who wasn't engulfed by the torments of the hell, it

¹⁸⁹ The arguments for the immortality of the soul, from the mentioned study of mister Ion Petrovici, it suggest, all of them, the possibility of a spiritual life without body, a lot richer and happier than the one into body.

constitutes a victory over the inferno¹⁹⁰.

The Holy Scripture and the churchly songs seem to tell us that Jesus did not stay, in the interval from His death to His resurrection, only in hell, but He went also in heaven. "(Lk. 23: 43) (...) Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." And at the Holy Liturgy, after the entrance with the gifts, the priest says: "In the grave with the body and in the heaven with the soul, like a God, into heaven with the thief and on the chair you were sitting, Christ, with the Father, and with the Holy Ghost, fulfilling everything, You, Who are boundless".

Also from these places it would turn out that Jesus was also in heaven not like God, because like God He was everywhere every time, but like a man because while He was on cross He announced like something future His presence in heaven. His place like God, though it is everywhere, it is about everything, it is a place of a Master, it is "on Chair". The heaven is the happy place from after death and in it arrive only the righteous, but, anyway, it is a place for people. In heaven will be Jesus, like the one Who has in common

¹⁹⁰ The contemporary Protestant theologians do not admit anymore an existence of the souls after death. The whole man, body and soul, he is destroyed, by having to resurrect in the dooms day only the righteous ones. So sustains C. Stange, *Das Ende aller Dinge*, 1930 and Paul Althaus, *Die letzten Dinge*, 1933, though the last one is more reserved than the first one, and he admits also a resurrection of the unbelievers for the eternal punishment, and not only of the righteous for happiness. In the dogma of the Orthodox Church about the descending of Jesus with the human soul in hell – with the body was impossible, because the body was in the grave, and with the godhead He was everywhere – it is implied a rejection of this theory, into a double way: 1. What would have been Jesus searching for in hell, if the hell hadn't existed like a place of unhappy living of the souls after death? 2. By staying for three days with the soul without a body, He showed also the reality of a happy existence of the faithful souls after the separation from the body.

with the thief, the humanity¹⁹¹.

These expressions about heaven, probably, they must be understood that in the interval while the body remained in grave, Jesus did not defeat only the inferno but He also inaugurated the happy life of the righteous ones after the death with the body. These two deeds stay are closely related. On the other hand, the establishment of this happy life of the people on the plan from beyond, it is the same with their escape from death.

The songs from Triodon present the victory of Jesus over the hell, like a helplessness of the hell to hold Him. The hell received Him into its content, not knowing what a power hid into the One Whom it received. But, once being inside the hell, the power of Jesus has erupted in all its shininess and breaking the gates of the hell. This event has a spiritual signification, not a material one. Jesus didn't break material gates and He didn't collapse walls which surrounded a space. If it had been so, then any soul could have come out from hell, from its content, and neither the hell wouldn't have been anymore a reality to the people who die in sin, since then and into the future.

¹⁹¹ **H. ANDRUTSOS**, by not affirming that Jesus stayed during the three days in hell, lets open the possibility that He was also in heaven (w. c. p. 230). Of course, because the heaven was still not existing when Jesus died, but only after He inaugurated it through the liberation of the souls from hell, it is explained why the teaching of the Church it does not explicitly mention the heaven related to the three days while Jesus stayed with the body into grave. Even more, because the action of Jesus in those three days it seems to be concentrated on the raising from hell the souls of the righteous and only like a result of this action it begins the heaven's life, like a final of these three days, it is very justified to speak in a accentuated manner about the descent of Him into hell and to let on the second plan, on another meaning, the idea of the heaven.

The inferno is the tormented existence on the plan of the eternity. It is the deficiency of the spirit, the deformation, without any hope of atonement, of the spiritual life. It is the spiritual helplessness interweaved with the despair, caused by the conscience of the eternal perpetuation of this state. It is the incapacity to love, the incapacity for communion.

Jesus didn't enter in hell in order to taste this state. Not even for a moment He did belong to hell in this quality. Right from the first step He was victorious over the inferno. He didn't experience the inferno inside Himself, and He didn't descend with His spirit into the spirit of the hell. By stepping inside the hell, He remained somehow above the hell. If it can be said that He entered the hell, this is only for, the moment of His death consisting in the passing of the human soul on the plan of the eternity, and the eternity of the human souls not having until Him another form except the tormented one, His soul had to have attitude towards that tormented eternity in order to inaugurate the new form of the eternity. Jesus died the death of the people burdened with the ancestral sin. To the law of this death it belongs that the soul, after the short time of the expiration, to wake up in hell, in the first moment of the existence separated from body, in order to see himself in hell, in the world of the tormented spirits.

Jesus, by obeying this death to the very end, He saw Himself, on the first moment of His existence without body, in hell. But, on the same instant, the power of His soul - unchained from the sin accumulated during the bodily existence and intensified by the union with the godhead - erupted out into a plenitude of life and, through this fact, He was not even for an instant a citizen subjected to hell, and He didn't descend into the spiritual deficiency and into the abnormality which the ones who belong to the hell live in.

I believe that it may be said that, through the same

act of eruption of His life after the separation from the body, though He defeated the death, He established also the order of the happy eternity of soul, namely the heaven. Through the same deed He defeated the hell, but He also established the heaven, though logically it precedes the reckoning with the hell or His detaching and, through this, of the souls of the righteous from hell.

But, if the things are like that, it won't be needed to be told that any soul who goes into heaven, it firstly makes contact with the hell, in order to verify its state of purity? Partially, the Church affirms this thing in the doctrine about the judgment which is done to every soul after the separation from the body, doctrine that has found an intuitive expression in the belief about the twenty four customs. Though, about the human souls it cannot be told in a proper sense that they make contact with the hell in order to defeat the hell, because of, on one hand, the law of the death, like punishment for the sin, and thereby like a bearer of the souls into hell, it has been removed to the righteous through the death of Jesus, and on the other hand, only Jesus defeated with His own power the force of the hell and He has established the order of the happy eternity. The believer goes, on the virtue of a new law, right into this eternity, prepared by Jesus Christ¹⁹². Jesus defeated the hell, in principle, and He prepared the heaven to all the ones who believe in Him. If every soul is placed after death, for a moment, between hell and heaven, the decision for heaven is not, in fact, a man's victory, but it is a victory of God, or better said, an ascertainment of the man's faith in Jesus Christ.

¹⁹² "(Jn. 14: 2) In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (Jn. 14: 3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

But to Jesus it is attributed the descent in hell also for the reason that He removed from hell the souls of the ones who died with the faith in Him, but they were kept though in solidarity with the condemned souls, on the virtue of the fact that the law of death, like passing towards the hell, it was not affirmed yet. Jesus didn't remove them through a purely exterior action, because of the faith into which they died was gave them the comforting certainty that they will escape, and gave them a power of spiritual raising which started working by itself when Jesus appeared in front of them. Though, their escaping it couldn't be done until the Savior didn't show Himself in His victorious brightness, announcing through this that the law of the universal punishment was removed. Jesus, like Savior of all the people who believed or who will believe in Him, He should go to announce also to the ones from hell, who died into faith, that they are saved, in order to bring to them the fruit of His salvation.

By and large, the teaching that Jesus descended in hell, but like a king, and not like a hierarchal, so that He remained though above the spiritual torments of the hell, perhaps it must be understood like a special closeness, of His, to the souls from there, for those ones who put in the life from here, by faith, a basis for the salvation, in order to raise at the salvation. Though the happiness of Jesus begun immediately after the expiration on the cross, unlike the believers from after Him, in His happiness He couldn't forget about the sufferings of the ones from hell, He couldn't come closer to them and to not make them everything possible to be done from His part, in order they to be saved and - if they fulfilled the condition they, like men, could fulfill in the earthly life.

His closeness to the souls tormented by inferno, it didn't last not only for a moment, but He insisted among them for reestablishing the full communion between Him and the souls capable of that

communion, namely for their full exit from hell and consolidation in heaven. He must also give to those souls, the joy to spend more time around Him and for them to enjoy the sweetness of seeing Him. If among the people on earth He stayed for thirty, and respectively, three years, leaving after Him an important trace in their historical memory, He must stay also, among the ones who had not the joy to know Him into history, at least for three days, for them to feed out of the memory of this joy, until the final judgment. Of course, Jesus, like God, and through this, even like man, He still remained after that, towards the souls from heaven into a bigger closeness than towards the people on earth. But, though, by the fact His second coming, to the last Judgment, it will be - to the ones from heaven too - a second coming, a turning back after a long time, during which, in a certain way, He was gone, it turns out that, in a certain way, He is not fully present neither to the souls from heaven, until that day. All of these are according to the doctrine of the Orthodox Church, according to which the happiness of the soul after the separation from the body and before the final Judgment, it is not complete. Only the Roman-Catholics sustain that their soul will immediately receive the full happiness and the final Judgment will not bring anything new in this regard.

We will see how, into the light of the Orthodox teaching, also His ascension to heaven receives a meaning, like also His second coming, whilst from the Catholic point of view, all of these lose both the interest and the reason.

Due to the fact that the heaven is the communion of the souls with God, and this was fully accomplished also to the ones deceased before, only through the coming of God on the ontological human plan through embodiment and in a perfect way through His sacrifice on the cross - in order to be possible to draw out from hell and to move those souls to heaven - Jesus had to

go in the appearance of the one Who was crucified to where they were and, through His presence, to place them in this communion, namely to establish the heaven. His sufferance had to present itself, at least like a past thing, but one the most palpable, also in their front. By the fruit of His sacrifice had to enjoy, in the first place, the souls of the ones deceased into faithful waiting for His coming. Also, for these souls remained in heaven, unlike the ones who believe in Christ but they are on earth, their communion must be fuller than the communion of the ones from the earth.

Even if also the resurrection and the ascent of Jesus they mean a certain leaving of His, and a raising above all the people, in order to be able to come for the second time – being given that the heaven is a higher spiritual region – Jesus is closer to the ones from there than to the ones from the earthly life.

X. 2. The Resurrection of the Lord

Before everything, the resurrection of Christ founds, by and large, our belief into a continuation of the life after death. “(1 Co. 15: 17) And if Christ be not resurrected, your faith is vain”, said Apostle Paul. Without this event we could not found at the people who lived in history any proof of the life after death; we could have said that Jesus, by dyeing, He definitively ceased to exist and any man through death he perishes in an integral way. If this belief hadn’t been founded through His resurrection, it wouldn’t have had any importance the difference between the ones who believe and the ones who don’t, and it wouldn’t have been anymore any proof that Jesus was God, and His work, it was a savior work.

But, obviously, supposing that the resurrection of the Lord has this purpose of being a basis, we are going to develop, other significations of it.

The modern considerations, which are brought in favor of the soul's immortality, they see in the separation of the soul from the body a liberation of his enchained powers, a burst into a fuller life. The Christian, based on the revealed teaching and upheld by the indication of some experiences, he believes that the souls will be partakers to such amplification of the life, by leaving from here without being surrounded by sin. The first one Who passed through death to a fuller life was Jesus Christ.

The sin, therefore, is a more durable impediment on the way of the spiritual life, than the body is. The sin remains permanently tied on the soul, like a disfiguration of his being. The body might not affect the powers of the spirit in their being, and it might only be a barrier in manifestation. The sin deforms and it weakens them to their heart. This truth is illustrated by the two forms of existence of the souls after death, because, though all the souls leave their bodies, not all of them go into a tormented existence like it would have been if the body had altered their being, or into a happy existence, as it would have been the case if, besides body like a passing barriers of the soul, there hadn't been anything else to blunts the soul in a more durable way. But, a real separation between body and sin, in order to be possible to ascertain what can be actually done or what can be attributed to one or another, it doesn't take place but only after the separation of the soul by the body. In the earthly life the body and the sin are like an undivided whole, so that is harder to really highlight that the impediment of the spiritual life it isn't the body, but it is the sin. According to the Christian teaching, the man, ever since the first moment of his apparition in body, in the earthly life, he is burdened with the hereditary sin.

Not the born body is the sin; between them it can be made, in the light of the existence of the souls in the future life, a conceptual distinction. But the sin

appears together with the apparition of the man into body, namely on the first moment of his existence. The earthly existence of the man, the first form of his existence, it is born with the seal of the sin and this fact is recognized in all his life's unfolding. But the body is the seen form of this existence. Even if through the baptism in Jesus Christ, the man is removed from under the slavery of the sin, he still remains, while on earth, into a body of which report towards the soul are determined by the general law of the earthly existence of the people, after the apparition of the sin into world. The body, after the ancestral sin, it has become an instrument of the sin, not only because the sin, like an act of the subject, it is done through him, but also because through him it encircles the soul even more in the development of its power. This ingrate service is fulfilled by the body after a thickening, after its structuring in this sense. Even when, from inside a man the sin has vanished, this structural thickening of the body remains, being also a condition of the man's engaging in the form of this world, determined by sin.

In this way, the death accomplishes a double meaning in report with a world affected by sin. First, it shows that through the two form of existence of the souls, after the separation from the body, that not to the body it is due in the final analyze the hindering and the deformation of the life of the spirit, but it is due to the sin. Secondly, the death dissolves a body which, even when it is no longer an environment for the manifestation of the sin, it cannot be transformed in a such a great measure than to not narrow anymore the life of the spirit, no matter how much it would shrink this deficiency during the earthly existence - that of some saints, for instance. The historic body, if it is not the environment of manifestation for a present sin, it still bears in its structure the thickenings produced by the past sin, or by its continuity with the corporality of

a sinful mankind and of a cosmic nature adapted at such a corporality. **That is the cooled lava, showing that the fire of the sin passed through that soul.** The historical body cannot be modified in the frame of this world, but it must be destroyed to the ground and it must be entirely removed out of the continuity which it is in, with this form of the world.

But, if the body is a creation of God, constituting the natural environment for the manifestation of the human spirit and, if it isn't the body the cause of the sin and of the spiritual life narrowing, its destruction won't be but a condition for its renewal, for its raising into a form which no longer wears the stigma of the sin. Who believes that the man is created by God, namely like a whole composed of body and soul, and who also believes that the sin didn't definitively destroyed this creature, that one must believe in the resurrection of the bodies like into a necessary conclusion, namely he must believe in the restoration of the man as a whole.

This resurrection cannot take place though before the transformation of the entire face of this world, which is affected by sin and thickened on the measure of the conviction of the people driven by the passions.

In the present form of the world, it is impossible, for instance, not to exist death, so it is not possible an endless life, a life full of resurrection to the people who live according to its laws. The younger generations will be able to find food, only if the older generations die. On one hand, it is a divine commandment that people to use the sexual instinct for procreation, and on the other hand, if the people keep multiplying without death, the earth won't be able not feed them.

But there are other features of this world which show this world's appropriateness to a sinful mankind. The one who wants to maintain himself, and to reach a better situation, he must fight the people. But, in this way, *volens volens*, he removes others from certain

goods. We are not drawing out from here the extremely Protestant conclusion of H. Thielicke, for instance, that, in the actual form of the world, one cannot live without sin. But, it is a fact that who wants to live without sin, he must suffer. There exists a certain nonconformity between the life of purity of somebody and the laws of this world¹⁹³.

The form of this world avenges itself, somehow with jealousy, on the one who doesn't live according to its will.

Here is another cause of the forced death of Jesus. But, in general, the laws of this world grind all the people who live in its arena. It is an evil which consumes itself, manifesting in this too, the greatness

¹⁹³ **KARL HEIM** in "Jesus der Herr", Furche-Verlag, Berlin, 1935, speaks in a not understandable way about a sort of bipolar aspect of the world (the world would be in the same time good, but yet bad), which he reduces it, at the end, again, to the unique aspect of the good. Any usual act can be done without sin, but the author must in connection with God. He can kill too. ("Wie der Zeugungsakt heilig ist, wenn wir dabei in der Gemeinschaft mit Gott bleiben, so muss es darum auch möglich sein, mit seinen Herzen zu töten, immer vorausgesetzt, dass wir überhaupt imstand sind, bei Gott zu bleiben und ihn über alle Dinge zu lieben", p. 147). The question is though: can the man remain in communion with God doing some acts? It isn't here hidden an indifferentism in what concerns the life of the man in report with the world, being taken away any serious and responsible meaning of his earthly destiny? We believe that there exists a certain incompatibility between some general acts of the existence of this world and the sinless life. The righteous man must restrain himself from some patterns of the living on earth. Here is the sense of the asceticism. That's why, the one who militates for an absolute good in full purity, he must suffer, if not even to fall crushed by this world. Generally, the one who decides himself to follow the path of God in this world, he must take, inevitably, his cross.

of God.

Of course, even like the world is now, it reflects the wisdom and the greatness of God. In it reign a physical fit and a social order, which make the life possible - even the sinless life with some narrowing. The fact itself that its adaptation after the sin it was made in the sense that the sin is punished through everybody's death and through some sufferings, or it is limited through regularly reactions, it shows the godlike wisdom and the greatness, which leads the world.

Though, about a fit of the world for a happy life, without sin and without death, there cannot be the case, and this is the cause due to which the saved ones cannot live in the present bodies forever, neither can they resurrect, in other bodies, until the actual form of the world it doesn't entirely come to an end.

Only in accord with this truth it must be conceived the transfiguration of this Cosmos through the divine grace of the Holy Ghost. It is a transfiguration not into an overtly brightness, but under a veil of humbleness. At the surface, into a seen brightness, there reign all the forms affected by sin.

We have mentioned the sufferance of the individuals without sin, because of their nonconformity with the world. We must notice that this sufferance is not to them a torment, but, in the same time, it is happiness. It is a transfiguration hidden into humbleness and sufferance, but it still is a real transfiguration. And, for the power from within them it is conveyed also to the Cosmos and to many beings from around them, which honor them like their powerful but mysterious helmsmen, one can say that, through the unseen action of the Holy Ghost, there exists a continuous state and there is produced a continuous work of transfiguration of the word in a hidden way, despite of the proud reign of the laws of the sin from the surface. And, even more, these categories of the sin they haven't a full reign either to the surface. Through

them sprout out and are mixed the powers of the transfiguring order from hidden. Without this counterbalancing the relative order from the surface couldn't have been maintained, but it would have become a chaos.

The form of this world, though generally, it is not compatible with the happy life of the ones without sin, though it mustn't be considered unilaterally like being universally evil – in Protestant sense – or like being universally good, which – by making a responsible life useless, and by deepening the whole life into indifference – it reminds again either about the Protestant thesis or about the naturalistic thesis.

The hidden transfiguration of the world remains so, generally, not full, not satisfying. Absolute reign over this world cannot win. Something like that would mean the end of this world.

This is the reason why the resurrection of the bodies cannot take place before the end of this world.

But here isn't important the time which the resurrection will take place at, but it is important the fact that it will take place once. The signification of this fact is that a happy existence of the soul after death it is not full without a body. The body, far from being the cause of the lack of the fullness of the man's spiritual life, it is a condition for this fullness. *But, this isn't the body of the earthy life, of which structure bears the traces of the sin, but it is the resurrected body, which won't bear these traces anymore.* In this way, the spiritual life of the man after death, it is superior to the one with the body from here, but the one from the resurrected body will be superior also to the last one.

This thing is shown to us by the resurrection of Christ, which is also to Him a new ascent like man. His resurrection is the full victory over death and not only a proof to the people from earth that death doesn't mean the total end of the being. This victory is the anticipation of such a victory also to us, because, even

the souls of the righteous enjoy a happiness after the separation from the body, like Jesus enjoyed too, their state of separation still presents a blunt, an incompleteness of the man through death, after the hereditary sin. The happiness, at which some souls go after death, it wouldn't have been possible if they hadn't been destined to resurrection, if that state hadn't been an anticipation of the resurrection, like it was also to Jesus His descent into brightness, in the region of the souls from after death.

Sergei Bulgakov, by noticing the tape measure on which is lined up: the descent into hell, the resurrection, and the ascent to heaven, he draws the conclusion that these acts are part of the hierarchal service of God or, in any case, they still not are parts of His royal dignity, because in His situation of emperor like man - says Bulgakov - Jesus is not but only since the moment on which He sits on the chair of glory, on the Father's right hand. The most important Biblical argument for its affirmation Bulgakov finds it in the Epistle towards Hebrews, where it is said that Jesus entered with his own blood in the Holy of the Holies (9: 12). So, until He didn't ascent again to the Father, Jesus would not finished His hierarchal service.

Bulgakov relies this thesis on the consideration that, like during the time of the earthly life, likewise after death, the human nature of Jesus gradually evolved to the state of full deification, until raising His human state on the godlike throne, namely to the perfect capacity of irradiating the divinity out of it. Jesus walked, after His embodiment, the road which Adam would have had to walk if he hadn't fallen. He raised His humanity from the *posse non mori* to the factual immortality; He made His humanity a perfect environment for the manifestation of the godhead. The resurrection was not an act of Jesus, but of His Father upon Him, for, in that moment, He still wasn't in the state of full manifestation of godhead.

Through resurrection, again, He was not placed at once in the state of full glory. Only after the ascension, which is also an act of the Father, He was fully raised from the state of kenosis, of service, and He was actually placed in His dignity like God and man. Of course, though, the resurrection is also an act of Jesus, because the Father can resurrect Him due to His efforts from earth in order to make the mankind capable of receiving the deification¹⁹⁴.

¹⁹⁴ “The glorification belongs to the hierarchal service; it is not shown like a royal service. The glorification is the work of God upon God- the Man and not His self-glorification... The Son of God, in the state of humiliation, He did not resurrect Himself, because He disrobed Himself in a kenotic way of the godlike power... Although, Christ was not only resurrected, but He also resurrected Himself. The created nature of the man – namely not only because it has become sinful, but also because it was made like so by God – it would not have been capable to endure through itself the power which to resurrect it. This one, simply, it would have destroyed it, being in fact for it a new creation, which would have destroyed the anterior one and it would have taken its place. Until resurrection in the life from after death, the human nature must be raised and, not only in the negative sense, through the liberation from sin, but also in the positive one, through its inside deification. On this path to the inside deification, which had to be traveled by the godlike work through the human liberty, it was placed Adam through the trying of his will to obey the divine commandment, but he was shown unreliable. After this fact, the salvation from sin and the participation of the human will to the deification, it was accomplished through the interweaving of the human nature with the godlike nature into the unity and the hypostasis of Christ. «The death could not keep Him», not only because it touched the nature of the Righteous without sin, Who didn’t belong to death, but also because His humanity, by being sanctified in the whole its being, it was deified and it gained a potentiality of the actual immortality. And this immortality was given to it, after, through the power of the resurrection from the part of God.”. “Adam, until the falling, He had the potential immortality, **posse non mori**, and the potential glory, but he

This thesis grows up from the ensemble of the conception of Sergei Bulgakov about the work of Jesus, Who would not have been saved the people by the bringing of the sacrifice like a fulfillment of an order of the divine justice, but by inwardly transformation of His human nature and, after that, through the irradiation of His power outwardly, into all the people. But this conception seems to us to be wrong when sustains – and so exclusively – a gradual perfecting of the human nature in Jesus. It could result from here that, at the beginning, this nature has had moral shortcomings.

The understanding of the cause, for which the efficiency of Christ over the people it increases after the resurrection and it gains the ultimate intensity after the ascent, it can be found not only into the thesis of Sergei Bulgakov, but, on one hand, in the fact that through His sufferance to death, Jesus penetrated and He is penetrating through the human ice, it made the man to feel Him closer, and on the other hand, in the fact that through resurrection, but only through

disrobed himself of them through the falling, together with all his descendants... The immortality, like the glory, it could not be due to an act effectuated upon the man, without to be due, in the same time, also to an act of the man himself, by taking through liberty, in a spiritual way, possession over his spiritual-bodily being. This possession was accomplished by Christ through His humanity. He won to the end both in life and in His death, the creatural helplessness of His human nature, bringing it to the sacrifice of the obeying the Father. In this way, through the hierarchal service, through the sacrifice of His life, Christ has earned, deservedly, His immortality... God gives the man the immortal life when the man becomes able and worthy to receive it, but the man becomes thus only into God- the Man". "God could create the man, without a man for the immortal life, but to resurrect the man, after the man has fallen, to the life without death, God cannot do it without the man, namely without his own inward victory upon death, as basis of the immortality" (C. w. p. 410-413).

resurrection and not gradually, in the time of the earthly life, it was produced, in fact, a modification of His body, which, among other powers, it was received also that one of no longer being touched by death, and to make easier the communication of the spirit and, by this, to transmit to all the people who believe into Him, the germ of the indestructibility. A new deification of the body of Jesus and, by this, an easing of His influence over the people after the resurrection, it takes, in fact, place, but this happens not through a gradual spiritualization of Him, but through the act of the resurrection, which is, however, the reward for His crucifixion. The accent on the crucifixion it must not be thinned in order to be divided on all the moments of His life. The crucifixion, especially, it must not be transformed in an act of self education of His human nature for deification. The crucifixion aims, in the first place, the reconciliation of the world with God. Just because He endured the death, which is the punishment of all the ones who are living in an earthly body, and the death could not keep Him, His new body received a new character.

But, apart from this, the churchly tradition considers the descent into hell and the resurrection, like being tied to the royal dignity. Even if the resurrection would be an exclusive act of the Father and not of Jesus Christ, which even Bulgakov does not affirm, the resurrection is no longer only an act of His humiliation, but of glorification, from the apart of the Father. The hierarchal ministration means sufferance, it means movement towards humiliation and towards annulling in death. The resurrection is therefore an act of ascent.

Of course, like the state from after the resurrection it is superior to one from the passing through hell, likewise, the state from after the ascent exceeds all of the previous states. But all of them are acts of gradual glorification, and not of humiliation and sacrifice.

The death, like the ending of the life, it was the lowest point at which Jesus Christ descended in renunciation and sacrifice. With His death it was done His “work” of salvation through pain and renunciation. It is true that, according to the Epistle towards Hebrews, the hierarchal ministration would have lasted until He had presented Himself in front of the Father with His blood, after His ascent. Though, also according to that Epistle, His hierarchal dignity lasts forever and ever (7: 24) - thereby also after the sitting on the godlike throne, which does not fit in the theory of Sergei Bulgakov.

In fact, the three dignities cannot be totally separated in order to be identified each of them to a stage of His life, like Sergei Bulgakov does, who, until around the passions, he sees the Savior only like a prophet, from the beginning of His sufferings and including the ascent, he sees in Him only a hierarchal, and after that only an emperor. The three dignities always coexist into the interweaving, though, in each stage, one of them is more prominent. When He was teaching like a prophet, Jesus did wonders like an emperor and through the teaching He was exercising an imperial power over the souls. Through the sufferings He also taught the people. And from death until the second coming, even if His dignity of emperor is very highlighted, shining in the heavenly glory, and exercising a greater power over the souls, He continues to teach through the Holy Ghost and to sacrifice Himself into the Eucharist or to intervene at the Father like a priest forever.

The presentation with His blood in front of the Father, into the Holy of the Holies, it can be understood like being accomplished in the moment of the death, because through death He reached further than any mortal, but also like a permanent presence of Him, like the One Who was crucified, in front of the Father, intervening through the remembrance – and

the remembrance like a new sufferance – of this fact, for the people.

But, even if the event and the state of the resurrection are not tied to the hierarchal ministration in a principled way, though, on one hand, they do not stay on the same level with the ascent and with the state from after ascent and, on the other hand, they are superior to the life of Jesus without the body, during those three days, while His body stayed in the tomb.

For the time being we are interested in knowing in what consists of the superiority of the resurrection over the existence without a body. We know that the man, by being created like a spiritual-bodily being, he can live the fullness of his life only into this whole, namely, when both his spirit and his body are not thickened by sin, so after the resurrection. But the answer which will be limited to this general teaching it seems to be too hermetic, too cheap in unveiling of some evidence. In our corporal existence it seems not to be indications for the confirmation and for the affirmation of this teaching. Just from the phenomena which present the body like a barrier to the full development of the spiritual life, are pulled out arguments for the continuation of the soul into a fuller but bodiless life, after death.

It is the place, therefore, to ask ourselves the question: it is presented the report between the soul and the body in such a way that the body to appear only like a barrier to the soul, and not like an instrument which eases the spiritual community amongst people? If the body would present to us in all the regards only like an impediment to the spiritual life, we can conclude that this function belongs to the body's being itself. But, if in other regards the body appears to us like a happy environment for the manifestation of the spirit, if the function of the body like a barrier is confronted to a function of the body

like a mean of soul's revealing, then we are justified to affirm that the body is meant to ease the showing of the soul, and not to impede it.

Such aspects of the role of the body we have so many, so that a lot of thinkers and artists consider the visibility of the body and the sonority of the word and of the human voice, like forms necessary to showing the spirit and the beauty.

Mister Ion Petrovici mentions in the essay "*Beyond Horizon*" the observation of Louis Lavelle, that the dead ones become more present to us into the soul because the body shell does not impede them anymore. This thing is true in a certain regard. But in another regard, this presence is to us extremely vague and, consequently, it is extremely uncertain.

If we hadn't believed in the immortality of the soul, the simple experience of a connection with the dead ones it would have been something totally unsatisfactory. How comes that where the faith misses, the pressure of a presence of the dead ones it does not appear, in order everybody to admit the immortality? The only sure presence, sure to our experience of the others, it is that one in body. Their body is not only an impediment to know them, but it is also the only way we can know, actually, about their existence, which their reality gnosiological comes close to us through, and their being is indicated to us and we can enter a communion with them, which we do not doubt of. No matter how intensive would be the spiritual influence of the other from distance or, generally, from an unseen plan, if he does not present himself corporally in front of us, that influence won't have the high character of the communion. However pervasive God is – close to us like a surely given fact, like a factor of communion – He becomes obvious to us only through embodiment.

The function of the body, even in its present state of sin, it cannot be determined only negatively, but also

positively, namely in contradictory terms, being shown by this that only through the sin the body's positive function was mixed with a negative one, and the sin could not destroy the original function of the body, but it can only darken it.

In any case, through the anterior affirmations we did not highlight the fact that, by being us into body, the subjects of the others are more unveiled, more certain, closer, while they are clothed in body. But we cannot draw from here the conclusion that in fact, they cannot manifest so easily while they are bodiless or, maybe, it is due to us that, by being clothed in body, we cannot perceive their manifestation? Besides these, we can ask: if we do not satisfactory know them when they are disrobed of their body, they too won't know us either we are clothed into body or we are bodiless?

About the life of the human spirit disrobed of his body, about the way of knowing its reports of communion, we cannot know anything concretely. We can suspect, though, that on one hand it is freer, it is fuller, it is higher in thoughts, after the removal of the present thickened body, but, on the other hand, it cannot be imparted with the joys of the full communion, which are occasioned by the precise reports, which between the human subjects can take place only when they are into their bodies. Probably, the degree of communion, possible to be accomplished through the earthly bodies, thickened after the sin, it is reached and even exceeded by the souls after death. But they can reach the fullness of the communion only into the resurrected bodies.

The resurrection establishes a new closeness amongst the human subjects, and, of course, in a way which we cannot imagine, between them and God, for, everywhere, the life of the human spirit in the pure body it is the fullest, and the spiritual realities of the world show the human spirit as more certain and more concrete.

The resurrection brought Jesus closer to the people. Of course, because their bodies are not resurrected as well, the full closeness will be accomplished after everybody's resurrection. But His body has become a perfect environment to His soul's manifestation, and by this, to godhead. Just this means a tighter closeness of Him to us, like a human spirit and like godhead. This closeness is understood as being of another nature than that one of the earthly body. A man in the earthly body he is close to us because his body has the inertia and the common law of our body, which our senses from here are conform to. But His spirit is less unveiled to us. Jesus was in the earthly body, in a certain way, closer to us after His resurrection - all the more, as much as His body was also deified during that time, for it was not stimulating towards sin, and the spirit was not facing so much hardship to reveal Himself through His body. But, for Jesus has taken voluntarily a body submitted to the laws of inertia, of opacity, of space, and of material maintenance, there weren't manifesting through His body, so fully, His human soul and the godhead, like they did through the resurrected body. His body from before resurrection, it included the possibility of death, and thereby, it had some shortcomings. That body didn't have the consummation of life, for it wasn't in the state of a body which defeated the death. All these constituted difficulties also to the spiritual revealing of Jesus. They explain the possibility of an ascension of His, through resurrection and ascent.

Into the earthly body, His approach was weakened and narrowed to the circle of the people among whom He was moving. After resurrection, the closeness grew up both in intensity and in broadness, by not being anymore Him impeded, by our space, in His action of being in the same time close to every man. After the resurrection He is closer to the humanity and closer to the man, being Himself elevated as humanity and as

man, to a maximum spiritual communicability, just because He is a fuller environment of God's revealing.

The resurrection with the body meant both an elevation of His own state, and also a bigger closeness to people, a greater effectiveness over their spirit. These are two aspects of the same effect. But the elevation of His own state it means also a bigger closeness of Christ as man, to God.

His approach to God would not mean also a intensifying of His efficiency over the human spirits, if this rising would not be of a man, of a human being, who, besides all His rising above the actual state of the people, remains in ontological connections with those. Only through the fact that He has lived into history with a real face of a man, has felt and has suffered like them and for them through all the human attributes, His rising does not get Him out from the connections with the humanity, and people are feeling through the remembrance of His face and of His historical life, but also through other more recent threads, His influence over them.

Through resurrection, Jesus, elevating Himself, as man, closer to God, He has elevated Himself, by this fact itself, to the highest stage of the mankind, which is a maximum communicability of His spirit in the relations with the people. The resurrection is the spiritualization of the body, it is the body's total overwhelming by spirit, it is the fullest actualization of the potentialities of the spirit. Because the spirit is perceived by us on the measure of our spiritual elevation, the closeness of Jesus it is experienced more powerfully by the ones who are living more through the powers of the spirit.

About the being and the attributes of the resurrected body of Jesus, we the people cannot tell anything determined and intelligible, because of us being into the earthly body.

The Gospels, on the other hand, they tell us that

the body of Jesus could be felt with the hands, that it received food and, on the other hand, that He was penetrating through the locked doors, He was appearing and disappearing from the eyes of the disciples and, generally, the usual physical touch from before it was no longer possible, like it is seen in the case of Mary Magdalene, in the morning of the resurrection.

Sergei Bulgakov, says that, in a certain way, the body of the resurrected Jesus it was spatial, but by another spatiality than the one of the material world. "The resurrected body of Jesus, with the exception of the «apparitions», it remains inaccessible to the disciples and beyond the human perceptibility. God conformed Himself to that perceptibility, by turning Himself, somehow, into this sensorial world, by making Himself accessible to the senses, to the sight, and even to the touching ["(Lk. 24: 39) (...) for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have"], (Agnetz Bojii, p. 314).

Jesus, of course, He has risen His body from grave. But we do not know if the resurrected body does not belong, to a structure and an order at which the current senses of our body cannot raise. In this case, the body of Jesus was not visible due to a compact nature similar to our one, but was made visible through will in our plan, conforming to the perceptive capacity of the disciples, but, in the way that, in the same time, they to realize the different character of this body. He was having in a real way a body of which continuity with the earthly body it is certain and, in this real body, but of a renewed structure and belonging to a transparent plan, was based the possibility, that Jesus to make Himself visible when and where He wanted, not like an inconsistent appearance, like the theophanies and angelophanies, from the Old Testament, but with a real and steadfast body. The body of Jesus was capable to make itself

invisible, but, if then its visibility in our plan it was its usual state, after resurrection the invisibility it is its usual state.

Is there a spatiality, an invisibility, and even a materiality - all of these transcending the spatiality and the materiality of the present state of this world and our perceiving capacity but being appropriate to the future form of the world - which we all will belong to, after the general resurrection? Are the spatiality and the corporality from this plan, accomplishing in a satisfactory manner, the synthesis between the forms of the existence of the spirit and those of the body, between the localization and over localization, between spatialization and over spatialization? These are questions which will remain unanswered until the unveiling of that perfect form of the world will have taken place.

Merejcovschi says that the body of Jesus was passing whenever He wanted from the three dimensions of our world into the fourth dimension (Tod und Auferstehung, p. 377). Karl Heim finds this suggestion like being wonderful (Jesus der Weltvollender, p. 193).

But who could know what that order of the fourth dimension consists of?

Sergei Bulgakov rightly notices that "the time spent by the resurrected Jesus in the world until His ascent, it established the connection between the current state of the world with the body of the worldly man, and the glorified state of the world after the universal change and the transfiguration of the human being with the spiritual body of the man" (p. 417).

If the body of Jesus had ascended from the grave directly to heaven, even if this had taken place in the plain sight of the disciples, there wouldn't have been produced sufficient evidence about His resurrection. But, besides this, His remaining on earth for forty days, into some contact with the people from this

world, it confirms the connection kept between the resurrected Christ and this world, and after He is not showing Himself anymore in a visible manner. Between the body of resurrected Jesus and this world, there isn't an impossibility of a relation. Because through the ascent of Jesus to heavens, He has not left His resurrected body, there doesn't exist a serious reason why His connection with this world could not continue, since, by and large, through resurrection, Jesus has established His connection with the world, and by spending more time in connection with the world, He manifested His will to keep this connection.

To Sergei Bulgakov, who sustains that Jesus, through ascent, He has left the body, the signification of this staying of the Lord on earth after His resurrection, it can no longer be justified. If Jesus, by ascending Himself, He had rejected His body, He would have experienced such a radical change, so that His connection with the world, restored through His resurrected body, it could have been submitted too, to a total transformation. If it was necessary to resurrect with the body in order to be restored His closeness to the world, the new forsaking of His body, it wouldn't have put again a distance between Him and the world? And then, the time Jesus spent on earth for forty days, could it have the meaning to show the continuous connection which will exist after the ascent, between Him and the world?

Beside this, what meaning would have had the resurrection of Jesus with the body, if after forty days He had left His body again? The meaning of this fact is reduced to a simple demonstration of the continuation of the existence of Jesus after death.

Sergei Bulgakov finds to this also the signification of prolongation of the hierarchal ministration of Jesus among people. But the purpose of such a prolongation it is quite impossible to be highlighted.

Two questions are to be asked concerning the

Lord's resurrection: 1. If people are destined to resurrect only all of them together, at the changing of the form of this world, why was Jesus an exception from this law? 2. Why Jesus has not continued to show Himself to the people to the end of the world?

Asking the question, why Jesus resurrected alone, we do not understand to ask ourselves how He had the power to resurrect, but we ask how was possible to detach Himself from the solidarity with the mankind in this regard, and to dispense Himself of the condition of the transfigured Cosmos, in order to live in a resurrected body?

The resurrection of Jesus must happen soon after His death and before the end of this world and of the resurrection of all people, for the establishment of the faith into the future resurrection and because it was impossible that not be immediately removed, by Him, any effect of the death.

The possibility to resurrect and to exist alone like a resurrected one, without the continuity with the entire transformed universe, it has its spring in His godhead. "This fact must stay in connection with the infinite advantage that Jesus has in report with the rest of us... He is the only One Who must not come back from the remoteness from God, like a lost son coming back to his parental home. Because, He has never fallen from the state of the Son... His contact with the source of life it has never been interrupted. The godhead power, which lives the entire creation from and which we have excluded from only because of our guilt, it fully crosses His being. Because the Son has taken upon Himself the helplessness and the humiliation, that was in contradiction to His real being... Once His mission was fulfilled, it was necessary to take place something similar to the construction of a dam and to the overflowing of gathered waters of the river, with a new force, in their riverbed... Here the delay was no

longer possible"¹⁹⁵.

Next to the intimacy of godhead, where dwelt the humanity of one of the three Trinitarian Persons, there were produced the necessary conditions for the existence of the resurrected body of Jesus and these conditions form the base which stays ready to receive the new form of the world or to cross through its entire reality, by imposing its laws when the time will come. In this way, through the resurrection of Jesus, it has been made the beginning of the future world, which stays for now hidden to our sight. "The resurrection of Christ it is like the awakening of the springtime. It is the beginning of the new creation of the world, which, only due to the creator pause, which we are still in, it is stopped for a while, before to be brought to its end"¹⁹⁶.

The basis of the future world, as established by Jesus into His Person through resurrection, it stays in connection with this world and it influences this world, preparing it for its entire transformation according to His form. The other world belongs to the present in Jesus Christ, presently hidden, but it is also a reality of the future. The eschatological reality is both present, like a parallel to the history and like a hidden force of the history, but it is also the future, having to begin in its unveiling and full manner, from the final end of the history. The present - but hidden eschatology -, it does not stay separated from the form of this world, but executes over it an attraction. This attraction has two aspects: through one aspect it makes us to feel ourselves close to it in the whole course of the historical life. It is like a light which accompanies us: to some people it is more powerful, more intuited, and to others it is lesser so. Through the other aspect of the

¹⁹⁵ Karl Heim, *Jesus der Weltvollender*, Furche-Verlag, Berlin, 1937, p. 178-9.

¹⁹⁶ Karl Heim, *w. c.* p. 186.

attraction, the eschatology is shown to us like a zone which we can fully enter only at the end of the historical life. In fact, the contemporary eschatology of our historical life it is shown close to us only in order to determine us to prepare ourselves for truly finding it at the end of the historical path, which leads us to it not shorting the path with any costs, but by conceiving it like a fulfillment of a duty towards the fellow humans and towards the historical ensemble which we were placed into. The present eschatology is like a friend who makes himself felt from the other side of a wall, advising us to walk parallel to the wall towards the end of it, where we will find our friend and we will be able to embrace him.

Only in this way can be solved the dispute on the question if the eschatology is the parallel reality and opposed to the time, or it is final-historical¹⁹⁷.

¹⁹⁷ This dispute is characteristic to Protestantism, which oscillates between a rationalism according to which this world does not wait for anything, knowing only about the communication from history with some timeless values and between a tendency in the style of Luther, according to whom the man in the life from here he does not receive any divine grace, but he lives exclusively by the faith in the future receiving of the grace. Though extremely Lutheran, the dialectic theology has declared itself in favor of a parallel eschatology, and, R. Bultmann, a leading representative of this eschatology, says: "The waiting for a future end of the world in time, it belongs to the mythology" (Jesus, 1926, p. 53). See more details about this idea of Bultman at Paul Althaus, w. c. And for similar ideas, see the works of K. Barth, and also of Fritz Buri, *Die Bedeutung der neutestamentlicher Eschatologie für die protestantische Theologie*, 1935, p. 42-45. A more just position at the Protestants, in this regards, it presents Paul Althaus. Based on the first three editions of the work "Die letzten Dinge", published in 1922, 1924, 1926, Fr. Buri, w. c. p. 47, he declares the Paul Althaus eschatology analogue to the one of the dialectic theology, namely a timeless one and not a final

temporal one. But into the fourth edition from 1933, P. Althaus explains his critics against the final temporal eschatology not in the sense that he does not admit the future life that follows to the present life, but his intention was only to revive the thoughts which were accustomed to consider that the end will not come until all the “signs” from the Apocalypse will be fulfilled, until the history will not be accomplished like an organism. He wanted to show that in the end of the history may come anytime, and how anytime it may come the end of the man, even he is not old. Like the New Testament communities were living with the thought that God will arrive soon, likewise we must live with this thought. (“Die Erwartung der Parusie hat die gleiche Aktualität wie die Erwartung des Todes. Auch in diesem konkreten Sinne, der ständigen Möglichkeit des Endes ist jede Zeit für uns, die wir sie erleben, letzte Zeit“, w. c. fourth edition, p. 265). The „signs“ which are weighted by the theology to calm down that the end is not close yet, are explained by Althaus like being determined by the events contemporary to the writer of the Apocalypse, though they can have a permanent-historical application. Look how Althaus interprets his position from the first two editions of the book, considered by the critics an opposition to the final-temporal eschatology: “In der Eschatologie die Aktualität der Enderwartung wieder zur Geltung zu bringen, die Eschatologie in diesem Sinne aus der Theorie wieder zur Theologie zu machen, ihr den theologischen Ernst zurückzugeben, war mein eigentliches Ziel von der ersten Auflage dieses Buches an, der eigentliche Sinn, meines Kampfes gegen die endgeschichtliche Eschatologie“, p. 267. He highlights in a more accentuated manner the present reality of the eschatology – based on resurrection – and, in the same time, its character of final target which the world is attracted towards, Walter Künneth, in his work “Theologie der Auferstehung”, München, 1935. “Into the resurrected Lord it is put the beginning of the eon of the resurrection and, through this, the ultimate and eternal reality takes its beginning. Into resurrected Christ is comprised in advance the entire existence of the new eon, the resurrection of Jesus is an anticipation of the new world of God. Through these, the resurrection of Jesus gains the character of a crossroads

of the times, but thereby the old eon is still there when the new eon begins... From this beginning of the new eon in the resurrection of Jesus, it does not result the abolishment of the old one, but there is a relation of opposition and inwardness of them (*das Verhältnis eines Gegeneinander und Ineinander der beiden Aeonen*", p. 242-245). The eon of the resurrection – like anticipation – it is, according to Küneth, so much hidden, than there is not any continuity between him and the old one from the surface. It is not hidden in the sense that we do not even know about it, but beyond the knowledge about it through faith, it does not leak anything from it upon us, over the old eon, which our being is constituted of. (*Beide Aeonen stehen in dem Verhältnis der Gegenwärtigkeit in Gleichzeitigkeit in zeitlicher Beziehung, sachlich gesehen aber in dem Verhältnis des Widerstreites. Der alte Aeon ist die sichtbare und gegenständliche Existenzweise, der Auferstehungsaeon dagegen die unsichtbare und nichtgegenständliche Wirklichkeit*", p. 245 – 246). But this news about the hidden eon of the resurrection we cannot have it except through a divine grace which comes from it. Consequently, there is a certain communication between the new eon and our world. This communication has, of course, some limits. This eon cannot pass through gradual evolution into the next one. Until the catastrophe of the end, it remains inapt to transform itself into the other one. The power which descends from the eon of the resurrection it does not totally change this perishable world and the perishable body, in a gradual way, into an incorruptible order. The bodily corruption is the frame which power which comes to us from that order must work into. But into this frame it can be accomplished a huge spiritual-ethical progresses on this earth. The history would be dispossessed of any tension if there wasn't this possibility of individual and collective spiritual progress in its frame. The earthly destiny of every individual could be considered fulfilled from the moment in which he has had the possibility to decide for faith or for faithlessness. The history is transformed in a static figuration, in this Protestant conception, despite its unrestrained tension for ever higher targets. But into the range of this eon it is never possible to reach an absolutely perfect target, namely the quietude. This

The influence of the present eschatology over us it does not want to get us out from history, by calling us to retreat, like through reflux, from our historical life, to its bosom, into a state of contemplation. The present eschatology, a contrary, it compels us to walk the path to the end with fidelity and conscientiousness.

Withdrawing ourselves from the middle of the historical life it would be a mistake.

But it is a bigger mistake to hurry up in the process of walking the path. It is useless to search for finishing earlier the life from here. At the full eschatological life we won't reach before the entire time of the world had come to an end. Everyone waits for the resurrection until there will everybody have come. The postponing of the personal resurrection until the end of the entire world and until the universal judgment, it means a confirmation of the value of the history, of the collective complex which every man has a mission in. The universal judgment does not mean only a judgment of every individual, when it is made the judgment of everybody, but it also means an overall judgment of the mankind, over its common work, of the history. From this overall judgment it will be detached the judgment of every individual.

How many deeds and words of every one of us do not mix into the deeds and words of the other ones,

world without tension it cannot be cogitated. And this means a permanent relativity. It means that through this world it is not possible to arrive where it tends. The passing in the perfect eon it cannot be but the work of God, not that of an evolution full of efforts, what does not mean, though, that this has not its importance. Walter Küneth is right when he affirms that the end of this world and the showing of the other one, it will not happen in the actual form of the time, but he is also not right, when he considers that in our world it does not exist an effort towards that perfection, helped by the powers which descends from the hidden eon of the present resurrection of Jesus Christ.

like influences or like ready made things? The life and the work of every one of us are interwoven with the one of the other ones, forerunners or contemporaries. And, at our turn, we are presents in the life and in the deed of the contemporary or successor people.

It will be not possible to pronounce a judgment upon us without to be implicitly pronounced also upon others. That is why, the final judgment cannot be but universal. We will be judged through the showing of the effects of our deeds until the end of the history and, together with the judgment upon us it will come the judgment upon so many forerunners and successors.

We have here one more reason why we cannot be resurrected one by one, because the resurrection coincides to the judgment. Only Jesus, who has not to endure together with us this judgment, He has resurrected alone, before everybody. Only Jesus, the Lord of our salvation, and the One Who prepares us the eternal happiness, He could rise up with His body, earlier. We, like people, we must reflect in this solidarity too, our sinfulness.

Jesus, like God, He raises Himself above this solidarity, and on the other hand, by being also a man, He remains though into a close connection with us. He is raised upon us only to prepare us, while we are still here, for our elevation to that perfect form of existence. He is also after His sacrifice on cross and through resurrection and through rising, the Mediator.

The solidarity with us He showed it through the fact that after His resurrection He spent, though, forty days amongst us, from which it results that also after those forty days He had been maintaining a connection with us until the end of the history.

But, the difference from us, His raising above us, but in favor of us, are shown not only in the fact that He has resurrected, but also because He has ascended to heaven after those forty days.

What does the ascension mean, and why did He ascend to heavens? Why He hasn't prolonged the form of the presence of those forty days until the end of the world? With these questions, we pass to the chapter about Christ's ascension to heavens.

X. 3. The Ascent to Heaven

The ascent to heaven it is the elevation of the mankind of Jesus into the ultimate intimacy with the Holy Trinity and to the state of honor, power, and full sovereignty. "The dogma of the ascent comprises the idea that the glorified human nature of Christ, elevated to heaven, it has entered the very bosom of the Holy Trinity. God-the Man has sited at the right hand of the Father, and not only with His godlike nature, but also with His human one, which consists of body and soul, of the animated and spiritualized corporality"¹⁹⁸.

Even if the words from before seem to tell the opposite, Sergei Bulgakov argues that, because in the bosom of the Holy Trinity it cannot be imagined the existence of a space into which the body to sit down, God has ascended to heaven without body. He has elevated into the intimacy of the divine glory only an ideal form, an energy of the body, which He formed His body of, when He came into world, and which worked through His body. "This «spiritual» elevated body is not a body in the sense of the earthly embodiment, but it is the ideal form of the manner of the body, its energy, which it was imagined through, the body of the embodiment"¹⁹⁹. It is the created Sophia, elevated to the supreme spirituality and together with the uncreated Sophia in the God's bosom through the second hypostasis. Through it, the Logos places Himself into the intimate relation of body with the

¹⁹⁸ S. Bulgakov, w. c. p. 421.

¹⁹⁹ W. c. p. 424.

whole creation, in order to sanctify the entire world. Only because He does not have an individual body, the Logos, through ascent, He makes Himself nigh to everybody; the energy of His corporality it keeps everything tied to the body, in connection with Himself. In the light of this idea, Sergei Bulgakov understands the mystery of Eucharist.

But this idea has not a base, neither in the Holy Scripture nor in the Tradition of the Church. The apostles saw Jesus ascending with the body and so the people will see Him, coming on the clouds of heaven at the second arrival. Sergei Bulgakov admits that Jesus will dress Himself again in His body on the second arrival. But where had His body stayed, until then, if He would have left it?

The Scripture and the Church give such an ultimate importance to the resurrection with the body, considering it like a true victory upon the death, than they are far away from the thought to annul it again through a teaching like the one of Bulgakov. Why would have been resurrect Christ, if He had left His body at the ascent? Bulgakov says that, by keeping that energy of the body, Jesus has not left the body through ascent, like He did through death. "This is not a separation from the body, like it happened through the death defeated by the Lord forever and ever". But what could consist the energy of the body of, kept by the Lord through ascent, like a plus, in comparison to the human soul kept through death, soul in which was also a power of connection with the body?

The theory of Bulgakov cannot be inserted into the string of the Christian teaching. If for the fullness of the humanity of Jesus the body is not necessary, then neither will be the resurrection necessary to us. This theory favors the idea that the body was necessary to Jesus only like an instrument until He has brought the sacrifice for the people, and not like a means of definitive closeness of God to the people. This theory is

close to the theory of Anselm the Canterbury, even if the idea that the salvation is a return of the spirits to God, with the abandonment of the bodies, it is taken from Origen. The reason why Bulgakov adopted this idea is, like it seems to us, especially the difficulty encountered by the contemporary human cogitation when tries to imagine a rising of the body into the intimacy of the divine existence. But, once it is admitted, by and large, the embodiment of a divine person, there will be no any special hardship to admit a new rising of the body in the frame of the intimate connection which the body into with the godhead. Sergei Bulgakov admits that Virgin Mary has ascended after her resurrection, with the body, but not rising, though, to the Trinitarian inside, but only above the entire creation²⁰⁰. But, if it is possible, over all, a rising with the body into another order of the existence, there is no hardship to admit a rising of the Lord with the body from the reality of our existence.

It is right that Jesus has resurrected also like a man into a region, surpassing the whole creation - and even Virgin Mary -, into the region of divine glory and authority. This is the glory where He was elevated. But, for this region is not spatially superior to any created region, it is not necessary a leaving of any form which stays in connection with any of the created regions. The supreme intimacy of the body in report with the divinity, it does not mean but the perfect capacity of this one to reflect the divinity over them. But, in any case, the human body remains like an eternal form of showing of the godhead and of the Logos and, through these, it is somehow assimilated to the godhead also like an own face of the godhead. Besides the whole ascent, Jesus remains in connection with us, and this means that He remains fully a man. He is tied to us through the same threads, the same fullness of the

²⁰⁰ W. c. p. 246.

human nature, like in case of Virgin Mary. Though, He is higher than her for, due to His godhead, the centre of His person it has its residence into the intimacy of the godhead.

Only because Jesus keeps His entire humanity, similar to us, His ascent, by being a supreme elevation of the humanity in the divine residence, on the right hand of the Father, it is, in the same time, a supreme closeness to the divine efficiency of man, because His humanity can now transmit us the entire divine power. It is close to us through the same plenitude of the humanity like in case of Virgin Mary, but with a superhuman intensity and vastness, due to the fact that His humanity is the perfect environment for the almighty action of the omnipresent godhead.

The godhead without humanity it is present in another way. It is not close like saving efficiency, like accessible intimacy to our humanity, or like a power which convinces us from inside us. Otherwise, the Son of God would not have embodied Himself. Only by remaining a man, God is close to us like one of us, like a power which belongs, in the same time, to the ontological region of the mankind. By ascending like man into the bosom of the godhead, Jesus has elevated the creature, by and large, to God; He has introduced the creature in the intimacy of the Holy Trinity²⁰¹, because He remains in a communication, enhanced to the maximum, with the whole creation and with the Holy Trinity, in the bosom of Whom He has elevated His humanity; He overflows, by this, His power over the entire world.

Sergei Bulgakov has admirable pages about the closeness of Jesus Christ to the world, after resurrection. But, while He conditions this closeness to the abandonment of the body and to the keeping of an

²⁰¹ Bulgakov, p. 432.

energy which Christ makes all the world a body for Himself through, we argue, listening to the teaching of the Church, that this closeness will be the more possible, the more the Lord stays in the ontological plenitude of the human nature. Through this closeness, by intimately descending into each man, He works not only from above over the people, but also from inside them, by making them a body to Himself and, into a wider meaning, by constituting His Church. Like a man puts the seal of his influence, of his person, on everything that stays close to him and on all the persons he loves, and for whom he sacrifices himself, by making them to cogitate like him, and to feel like him, and to follow him and, by this, to become a body of his, worn by his soul, Likewise Jesus - but in an incomparably greater measure, by penetrating into the intimacy of everybody, He makes them His mystical body or the Church. "The Lord masters not only from above, like God, Creator, and Providential, but also from inside us, like God-the Man, on the basis of His lack of separation from the world and this inward connection is His life into Church". "He remains united with the world, not only in a Eucharistic mode, through the mysterious eating of His Body and drinking of His Blood in the Holy Communion, but also through His power which works into the world. This is His spiritual presence into the world and His participation to the human life, not a sacramental presence, but a mysterious, spiritual, and invisible presence... This is not a pantheistic presence, a Lutheran one, but, if we may say so, an authentic pan-Christianity, a dynamic one, namely the life of Christ among people and the life of the people into Christ, in a closeness which, through its authentic intimacy, it surpasses any other closeness" (c. w. p. 426-7).

Just for Jesus has elevated, through His ascent, the humanity in the ultimate intimacy of the Holy Trinity, keeping and deepening, in the proportion of the ascent,

the closeness to the whole mankind, He descends, shortly after His ascent, the Holy Ghost over the ones who are of Christ, thus founding the Church. The Holy Ghost, like a supreme love of the Father, like a manifestation of His intimacy, He has descended over the world, because He has set Himself, in a perfect manner, over the humanity of Jesus, which has been elevated to the divine intimacy. Because the humanity of Christ, raised to that intimacy of the Holy Ghost, like His godhead, it is in the same time into the deepest intimacy of the people who are opening the gate of their inside through faith, the Holy Ghost surrounds them, for they are bearers of Christ. The Church, the mystical humanity of Christ, it has received the Holy Ghost, in the Church's quality as Christ's body. "The Holy Ghost, by resting upon Christ, He overflows over His earthly humanity into the persons of the apostles and through this it is done the work of Jesus on earth"²⁰².

Jesus is, through this placing of Himself into the supreme intimacy with the Holy Trinity, but also into the supreme intimacy with the mankind, a continuous absorbent of the humanity into the zone of the godhead. "He leads the mankind towards God, He introduces the mankind in the intimacy of the Holy Trinity. He appears, in this way, not only like the Reconciliatory of the sinful creature with God, but He also appears like the Mediator between the creature and godhead" (p. 432).

In another place we have shown that professor S. Bulgakov, by precisely delimiting the course of the mission of Jesus in the three dignities, he affirms that through His placing on the right hand of the Father it ended the hierarchal service and it has begun His royal service.

But when he arrives to talk about the role of

²⁰² W. c. p. 431.

Mediator, fulfilled by Jesus after His ascent to heaven, he clarifies his idea in the sense that God continues to be hierarch, but not hierarch in humiliation and sufferance, but in power and glory. The high priesthood it means now a dignity, and not a service, and its meaning doesn't imply the sacrifice and the intervention for the sinners, but it means, in general, an ontological bridge between God and His creation. That's why, His high priesthood continues after the end of the world too.

"In His high priesthood the ontological abyss which separates the Creator from the creature, it is defeated. And this mediation doesn't end ever; it continues even beyond the borders of this world" (p. 432). "The Holy Trinity is turned towards the world and the Holy Trinity unites with the world, through God- the Man, in His godhead-humanity, which rests the Holy Ghost upon. The godhead-humanity is, consequently, not only a fact, but also an act, not only an event which took place once, but it is also a continuous work, a work of God and a work of the man, a work that is being prolonged. The history of the world and of the man it has become a divine-human process. And the Logos is not only the demiurgic hypostasis, through God is turned towards the world in His creator work, but He is also the historical hypostasis, like Mediator, Who leads the world, through the Holy Ghost, towards its salvation... His history (if we can say so) prolongs in heaven after the Ascent too, because it still comprises new and unfulfilled events, like it is the second coming into glory, the parousia, and the other events shown in the Apocalypse (like Christ is shown by Paul the Apostle, by Stephan, and by other righteous from the Church)", (p. 434).

This cosmic vision of S. Bulgakov, in the perspective of which the world appears like penetrating, wave after wave, due to a powerful force of attraction, through the great door which is Jesus

Christ, in the godlike intimacy, it is wrong only because of too much letting Christ in oblivion, the One Who mediates through His sacrifice, by putting on the first plan that Christ, Who simply mediates by the fact that He is embodied, and He meets in His being both the divine reality and the creatural reality.

We are noticing here, like in the whole book of S. Bulgakov, the tendency to reduce the factor person in the favor of the factor substance, the factor liberty and the voluntarily interposition in favor of ontological fatality. Somehow, the world is united and it grows up in the unity with God, in a necessary way, through the force of the ontological attraction which is exercised by Jesus in the virtue of His identity, both with the being of the world, and with the divine being.

Regarding this tendency, we must accentuate that Jesus attracts us towards God through the intensity of some acts of personal character. The idea of a permanent sacrifice in His heavenly existence too, it is affirmed by the Holy Scripture and by the Church, with so much insistence, just because of that. The sacrifice and the sufferance express a report based on the most personal interest, by maintaining a supreme but free and personal intimacy. Otherwise, the high priesthood cannot be separated from the sacrifice. If Jesus continues to be hierarch, he will continue an actuality of the sacrifice. The high priesthood is not a simple ontological bridge, a mix of two opposite substances²⁰³. The high priesthood is of a personal character, by

²⁰³ The high priesthood is neither a simple title, earned through the past sacrifice. Like says Johann Tobias Beck in "Lehwissenschaft", p. 619 (according to Ewald Burger, *Der lebendige Christus*, p. 148): "The eternal priesthood", to which He was raised, it is not "only a title property or a sinecure", but "a living function". The salvation is hasn't been ended, it hasn't been finished, or isn't static, but it is in a living working. Jesus is the steadfast Mediator, through personal interposition between God and people.

mediating between personal factors which are not opposed through substance, but through ethical conflict. The high priesthood is mediation through the identification of the personal love both towards the Creator and also towards the other one. But the love towards two factors opposed through an ethical conflict, on the purpose of reconciling them, it is sufferance in the same time. The high priesthood is the mediation through love, and not through substance - through sacrifice, not simply through existence. Only because on the highest plan of the existence and, especially at God, the substance is nothing else but spirit, will, and love, and that's why it is possible to talk also about a closeness, through substance, between God and man. The love, in the intensity of the sacrifice, it exercises the most powerful force of attraction. Of course, in order this love to be possible, the one who manifests it must be capable of it. He must be God, in order to be capable of a divine love towards the man, and the man must to be capable of the man's love towards God. But the love of God towards man it must be shown to the man through a human face, in a human form, from human intimacy, and the love of the man towards God it must manifest with godhead intensity and power. There must be God with Human face to the man, and Man with godlike power to God²⁰⁴ - but not like a simple putting together of the natures, but like a loving and suffering person, like the Hierarchy by excellence.

²⁰⁴ By the fact that the Person of Jesus Christ meets both the human and the divine natures, His acts are historical and supra-historical; what He manifests towards us it comes from the heights of the heaven and what He manifests towards the Father it raises up from the human heart. After His ascent in the heavenly transcendence, Jesus, by remaining man, He communicates us the godlike goods from transcendence (see also Martin Kähler, at Ewald Burger, w. c. p. 161).

According to the Epistle towards Hebrews, Jesus, like the true Hierarchy, He had entered the Holy of the Holies, namely the heaven, with His blood that was shed on Golgotha, like the hierarchy of the Old Testament was entering the image of the Holy of the Holies, with the blood of a goat. But who enters the heaven He enters the eternity. The act or the appearance which He enters there with, it gains an eternal actuality. Only on the basis of this permanent actuality of His sacrifice, Jesus is Hierarchy for eternity. This actuality doesn't mean only the objective memory of the sacrifice brought once, but it means a certain subjective presence too, of it, in Jesus Christ. He is, until there still remains a man to be saved on earth, in the state of savior will and of suffering love as when He brought His sacrifice on Golgotha. By this state He manifests the supreme love of the closeness of Jesus towards people and towards the Father. By this love He brings people close to God, through this love He is the Mediator and the Hierarchy, and not by simply putting together in His being the two sides of the reality²⁰⁵.

²⁰⁵ According to Saint Maximos the Confessor, Jesus assumes our sins, in a relational way, not only when He is on earth, but all the time, in His quality of Head of the Church. This assuming of the others' sins it takes place between the persons connected through love. Between Jesus, in His quality of Head of the Church and the members of the Church, there exists this condition of maximum closeness through love, which makes possible the assuming of their sins by Him. But this assuming means participation to what burdens the ones to whom He wants to ease their situation, says Maximos the Confessor. So, Jesus suffers for our sins, after His ascent too, by melting them through this sufferance until He liberates us of the sins' burden. "But only by assuming from mercy, He bears them (the reproached passions), like the One Who is the Head of the entire body, like the medic who shares the sufferings of the one who suffers, until God, the One Embodied for us, He will liberate us of them, by scattering them and by totally abolishing them from us, through the power from within the body He has taken" (G.P.

The priest Sergei Bulgakov sustains that Jesus in heaven is Hierarch only into glory. It is true that in heaven the high priesthood of Jesus has entered a new phase, into which the glory appears on the first plan. But, the state of glory it is not fully incompatible with a certain sufferance for the fate of the people, that also to the people, in the most profound state of the spirit, various and opposed elements are comprised one into another. Paul the Apostle often confesses in his Epistles such states, by declaring here that he is full of joy, and there that he is upset (for example Phil. 2: 17–28). He tells the recipients, here to endure the sufferance, and there to continually rejoice (Phil. 1: 29 – 4: 4). Of course, in heaven Jesus is into glory; no one continues to hit Him, like it was on earth, but it is about a different sufferance, different from the one from earth, which is endured now by Him, completely voluntarily. “In the vision of the Apocalypse about the Lamb, who stays on the God’s throne, the death of Jesus and His ascent are seen like a whole”²⁰⁶.

The book of the priest S. Bulgakov let the impression that the sacrifice of Jesus on Golgotha has had not but the meaning to consummate the individual humanity of Him, to bring Him the glory and the placing on the right of the Father. The salvation of the people is due to this power, into which was placed the humanity of Jesus after death. So, the sacrifice has only an indirect report with the people and, in any case, the sacrifice belongs exclusively to the past.

To this conception must be emphasized that the sacrifice is the direct and permanent bridge between Jesus and people and just in this is manifested the intimacy and the intensity of the personal character of the report between Him and them.

The pure sacrifice of Jesus on the Golgotha was not

91, 237: 6).

²⁰⁶ Ewald Burger, *Der lebendige Christus*, Stuttgart, 1933, p. 100.

only the cause of a merit which He was raised together with His humanity for, on the godlike throne – the ascent impacted over the entire mankind – but also the permanent means of closeness and efficiency upon people. On this it is based the reality of the Eucharist. His own sacrifice, like sufferance from love, which brings the one Who bring it, closer to God and to people, with whom otherwise, He form a whole. Starting the walking on the path of closeness to God and to people, like man through embodiment, Jesus did a part of it on Golgotha, in order, through the sacrifice on the cross, to walk this path entirely at once. His human nature was suddenly deified through sacrifice, showing and transmitting through itself, in a maximum way, the godhead. It is not only about a bodily transference and transmissibility, but it is about a spiritual one too. All His spiritual powers become incandescent of love through the sacrifice which He brings. Through sacrifice these powers become capable to bear in them, like some unburnt pyres, the godlike fire. They become of an unimagined tenderness, of an untold penetrability and efficiency upon the human souls²⁰⁷. In this way, Jesus could

²⁰⁷ For the explanation both of the way how, through the descending into the intimacy of the people, Jesus has taken upon Him the responsibility for the sin, but also of the way how, at His turn, He transmits, especially after His ascension, through love, His purity to the people, there can be used the results to which have reached the psychology and the anthropology when studying the relation of love between two persons. These persons enter a reciprocal communication which they grow and they tend towards resemblance through, until their identification to one another. It is the so-called phenomenon of the “imagination”, which constitute of that, that the face of the beloved person, received in the inside of the other person, it becomes an impulse, which organizes all the spiritual powers according to his model. What the law cannot do, the commandment for the ennobling of the man, it is easily effectuated by the face of a beloved being, which the virtues

and the ideals are concentrated into. B. Viseslavlitz, based on the theories of Freud, Jung, Baudouin etc. he sees this power of the face in that fact that its sight causes the forces from the subconscious to sublimate (Etica preobrajennago Erosa, Paris, Ymca-Press, p. 71, etc.) L. Binswanger, without mentioning the subconscious, he insists upon the fact that the **imagination** between the persons who are loving one another, it is reciprocal, and it isn't only a subjective illusion, but it is a reciprocal communication of being, like in the case of communicating vessels, so that the two ones reach some kind of "Wäre die Imagination aber nur Verbildlichung und Einbildung im Sinne im der «bissen Phantasie» der Psychologen oder dar der **Illusion** im «aufklärerischen» Sinne eines... Feuerbach oder Freust, so wäre nicht einzusehen, inwiefern die liebe eine «Realität» sein kann; denn auf etwas «Unreales» kann sich keine Realität «stützen». Begreifen wir die **Imagination** aber als sinnen transzendentalen, Realität «aufschließenden» Modus de Daseins und verstehen darunter die **transzendente Einheit von Phantasie** («Bildhaftigkeit»), **Reälitatsoffenbarung** und **Einbildung** – im Sinne des «gläubigen» **Scheinbildes** des Daseins als unendlichen in das endliche Sein – so bleibt die «Realität der Liebe» – ohnehin das Realste «unseres» Daseins – auch «als Imagination» gewarnt undgelangen wir erst einen ontologischen Verständnis der **Phantasmagorie** der Liebe. (Franz v. Bader) und der Daseins fülle «entsprungenen» Magie der Wirrheit“. „Die sorgende Scheidung zwischen Mir und Dir als Individualität, ja als Existenz, schwindet hier hin“, w. c. P. 146-7. „Nur liebende Wirrheit besitzt **ganz**; denn **ganz** besitzen **Wir** nur in der **erwiderten** gläubigen «Sehnsucht», in der Reziprozität der «unaufhörlichen» **Einbildung** (imaginatio), in **Ein-Atmung** (inspiratio) und **Ein-Schalung** (intuitio), der liebenden Begegnung, mit anderen Worten, in der «unerschöpflichen» Selbstmehrung des Eros“, w. c. P. 278. „Nach all dem bedeute es auch eine viel zu enge Fassung der Du-Offenbarung oder Begegnung, wenn Mann sie als **Intuition** bezeichnet; denn sie ist viel **mehr** als An- und **Einschalung** in irgend einer Form, als rein schauendes Haben; sie ist An- **Verwandlung**, An-**Eignung**, und Ein-**Bildung**, in **einen** Wort; **Wandel**, nicht nur Schau“, (w. c. p. 502). The fantasy and the reality go hand in hand with love, increasing to

resurrect all at once, after His death, transmitting this spiritual force to His body and to resurrect Himself, showing the total intimacy which He has placed Himself in, through the sacrifice on Golgotha. If He does not cover these acts all at once, this won't be due not to an evolution which He will need to pass through, like a man – which would mean the reducing of the sacrifice to its unique importance in what regards the transformation of the humanity of Christ – but of some motifs which are important only to the people.

He does not resurrect all at once because His death was real and because the life only with the soul, which is lived by people after their death, it is possible, but it is an inferior stage of life in comparison to the life in the resurrected body.

He didn't ascend all at once after resurrection, in order to convince the people about His true resurrection and in order to show His real connection with the people in their life on earth. (More than that, though, He could not stay on earth after His resurrection, if He didn't want the people to believe that the life with the resurrected body is not but a momentarily turning back to the earthly life and not an experience which happens according to another

the infinite the common existence. Everything you can imagine as pure about the beloved one, he or she actually receives it, and at her/his turn, she/he will send back upon you like a formative power. In the relation of love, two beings are opening to one another the deep sources of the universal existence. All the more, the relation of love between man and Jesus-God, it makes that all the purity and divinization which Jesus wants the man to be raised at, it becomes reality which the man is actually imparted with. From Him it is conveyed to the man everything He imagines like an ideal form of the man. The form of Jesus is really conveyed to the man like a power which makes the man to grow up according to His norm, and Christ raises the man up, by the fact that He contemplates with love the face of the man, into the intimacy of the infinite space of His heart, in His "body", which is the Church.

cosmos).

Jesus slowed the effects of the sacrifice from Golgotha for the sake of the people.

Thereby, the people didn't feel either His supreme closeness after His crucifixion. They could not support the simultaneous inrush of the whole closeness of Jesus and, through this one, of the Holy Ghost. The apostles must firstly accustom themselves, to the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and they must be grinded within, for a while, by the amazing thought - and of an ethical overwhelming signification - that He is Himself the Son of God. He crucified Himself for the people. A certain belief, so a certain closeness to God, through Jesus Christ, it was also this whole closeness through the Holy Ghost they could receive, though, only after a time of getting used to less than that.

But this permanent and supreme closeness of Jesus to the people it continuously has at its basis His spiritual tension, through which it has been established too: the love to the death. This hadn't disappeared from Jesus through His ascent to heaven; otherwise, the closeness would have had an ontological character, of a substantial kinship, not a personal character. The love to the sacrifice, the state of spirit which determined Jesus to receive the death for the people, not only those have remained after that, but, because the whole His spiritual power through deification it raises and it intensifies, reaching an untold efficiency - His spiritual power raises also to proportions which we cannot imagine. Jesus does not forget in heaven about the sacrifice that He has brought for people and He is not ashamed of it, but He affirms about them what He has done for them. Jesus even on the godlike throne, in the state of glory, He is the Lamb who appears like "stabbed" (Apocalypse 5: 6). The salvation of the world is being worked, in all its continuity, not through a kingly command, but through the Lamb Who, though He has defeated the

death, He still remains stabbed. The big and the uplifting power which gives the human souls life, which saves the world, which upholds the world, which destines the world to eternity, it is not a magnificent exterior authority, it is not a development of prestigious force, but it is the suffering love of the Son of God become man. The stabbed Lamb is the base of the foundation of the world, a world which is in course of salvation, which Christ is the force maintaining the dynamism into, the dynamism of the world towards the world's consummation, towards the world's growing up in spirit. Only Him opens up the big mysteries of the mysterious book, which comprises the development of the historical life. The sacrifice of the biggest One, for the little ones from the world, His love brought to the sufferance, namely to the maximum focusing, it is the ultimate explanation of all it is shown noble on the world. "The Lamb is the torch of the fortress", namely of the saved and eternal world (Apocalypse 21: 22), "from His throne springs out the river and the water of the life", (22: 1).

What has been changed through the ascent of Jesus, it is that starting since then, there doesn't stay on the supreme throne, where all of them are leaded and are sustained from, only the almighty God, Who judges people according to the inflexible norm of the justice and Who makes them feel His majestic power, but on that throne the Lamb has been elevated too, the One Who watches the world with the eyes of the One Who endured the death out of His love for world. Next to the almightiness which imposes through the majesty frightening and awakening the admiration, there stays to the right, so even on a more honored placed – but only because such is the will of the divine Almightyness – the loving tenderness, which penetrates inside the souls, in order to gain them through love. That is why Jesus says on the moment of His ascent: "(Mt. 28: 18) (...) The whole power it has been given to me in heaven

and on earth.” From the moment of the ascent and of the placing to the right of the Glory, a new regime was installed at the leading of the world, to say so. It has been invested with the whole power and with the whole authority, a new method of dealing with the people. That’s why Jesus sends the apostles to teach and to baptize all the people of the world. He has the authority to do it and He will give them also the power. Though it will work though a new method, because it has been elevated on the godlike throne, Jesus, Who represents it, He will be the One Who has godlike authority and features, in any place and on every day with the ones who activate into His name (Mt. 28: 19-20). The consummate humanity, in the supreme closeness towards people, by transmitting through Himself the godlike power in the form which the people is not frightening by, this consummate humanity is raised on the throne of the divine authority. This event isn’t important only to Christ, but to the entire humanity. The humanity staid before at distance, locked under the sin and under the divine anger, now the humanity is elevated on the God’s throne, in order to work with His power, but with fraternal closeness and ardor for the salvation of the human subjects. God raises the man near to Himself and He says him: Save Your brothers, by yourself, but in order to do this you have at your disposition the whole My power. Better said, He makes His Own Son a true man, born on earth and twinned with the people in everything except the sin, and then, God places His Son, in this quality, on His right hand, in order to work with godlike power and with human intimacy, for the salvation of His brothers.

The meaning of the ascent of Christ like man on the godlike throne it is presented, under two aspects, which stay in close connection to one another. On one hand, the Man is called to work through entire his ontological kingship and through the whole fervor of His brotherhood, but, in the same time, with godlike

power, for the salvation of the fellow humans. On the other hand, the humanity is elevated to the supreme honor, to the honor which is deserved only by the Creator and the Master of the World.

Among the consequences of the hypostatic union, there is comprised also one that we have not analyzed yet in the respective chapter, because it is more appropriate to speak about it here. That consequence constitutes in that, to Jesus Christ, on the basis that He is the embodied Son of God, that the same divine subject is also a subject of the human nature, He deserves to be worshipped like God, either He is looked from the godhead side, or from the side of His humanity. To His humanity, of course, by not being regarded as self-standing (such a thing does not exist), but in the hypostasis of the Word, it is granted the same worshipping like to His godhead.

This teaching regarding the fact that Jesus has been elevated as man, on the godlike throne, it is beyond any doubt.

Staggering it is this fact: our nature, not as self-standing, but in any case our real nature, it stays on the godlike throne, and it leads the world. Of course, the being of the godhead hasn't been changed through this, but henceforth our nature participates too, and it is taken account of it, to the almightiness of the administration of the world. The Son of God is colored by the human feeling in everything He does. At the leading of the world there is a mind, a feeling, and a soul, like we have, and through the intimacy which exists in amongst all the living, feeling, and activate through the human nature subjects, there exists a deep communication, a lasting solidarity, between the One Who holds the rudder of the Universe and of the people, and somehow, the entire mankind participates to this leadership of the world. At least through prayer and through love towards Jesus Christ, we are all of us partakers to the leadership of the

world, through God's benevolence to have had decided to elevate our humanity on the heavenly throne. At the rudder of the world is not only the divine wisdom and almightiness, but there is also a heavenly heart, which participates in the same time to the faith of sufferance of the mankind, relieving it.

X. 4. The Connection of the Ascended Jesus with the Historical Humanity

Jesus Christ has ascended to heaven shortly after His resurrection, both in order to receive the whole godlike power in the leadership of the world towards salvation, and to let to the latitude of the people to freely decide to believe in Him or not. If He had continued to stay, with the greatness of His resurrected body among people, those ones would have been forced to recognize Him as God. The history, like the arena of the life of the free decision, it would have become impossible.

But now comes to question: how it is possible the connection between Jesus Christ, the ascended One, with the people from history? This is the same with the question: how can be Jesus Christ not only a past reality of the history, but to be also an present reality, together with His sacrifice and resurrection?

When we say the Jesus has ascended to heaven we are think that He has ascended Himself on the plan of the eternity and, though it is easy to think that He, from there, He watches with interest our life in time, though it is harder to us to understand how can we be capable of the connection with Christ, which it is intended by Him. In other words, how could the time meet the eternity?

When we have highlighted the role of the history like a propagator environment of the Revelation, we

have seen that the history is accompanied by a presence and by a work of God. So, even before God has made Himself a man, it was possible a certain connection of the history with God and a certain closeness of His to the history and it continues the remaining into this closeness. But, by the fact that Jesus Christ, even after His ascent, He is God in human nature, His connection with the history must be more intimate. And that part of history, which stays in this more intimate connection with Him and it unfolds in this way, by constituting some sort of a core of the history: it is the Church.

Within the Church the conscience of the presence of Jesus Christ it is alive. The Church is the community of the believers, from all times, with Him. The question is: how is this communion possible, being given the eternal plan, on which Jesus lives, and the temporal-historical plan, on which the life of the believers' community it unfolds?

The biggest difficulty on the way of understanding this communion it is constituted of the difference between time and eternity. That's why, in the contemporary theology and under its influence from today in the philosophy too, the problem of the time has reached in the middle of the debates. It has been argued that the Kantian notion of the time, like an empty shape, which the man fills it with the intuited contents, it makes impossible the presence of the Resurrection of God in the present time. In this case, either is a part of a past time, or it is outside time, and the man cannot elevate to it, except by getting out of time, which is, according to the Kantian conception, impossible²⁰⁸. "The formal notion of the time it impedes

²⁰⁸ **W. KÜNETH**, *DIE Theologie der Auferstehung*, p. 167: „Hier erscheint die Zeit als der an sich seiende inhaltleere Rahmen... Der Mensch tritt erst in diese Zeitform herein und macht das Vakuum der Zeit durch das Dasein zu dem konkreten Leben. Zeit und Dasein sind also gesündeste Größen, die sich wie Form und

us to understand the present Jesus like a reality”²⁰⁹.

The dialectic theology identifies the time not to a shape, but to the transitoriness with the ephemeral character of all the things into history. In this way, the dialectical theology establishes an opposition of exclusivity between time and eternity. A connection between the eternal God and the temporal man it is impossible²¹⁰. The dialectical theology brings to extreme the Protestant thesis that the man cannot have from God any sign, or any bridge, but the man is exclusively entrusted to the manhood of a faith which is not leaning on anything.

Unlike these theories of the time, a number a theologians like: H. Schmidt, H. Frick, W. Küneth, they have formulated a notion of the time which to make possible the connection of the life from time with the eternal God and, especially, with Jesus Christ.

According to H. Schmidt, the time is “something pre-formal” (ein vorformales Etwas), which is able to offer shapes both to the finite contents and to the infinites ones. The passing character of the things it is not due to the time, but to some content of them, which the time offers a special shape to. That pre-formal something can offer also a shape to the

Inhalt zueinander verhalten... Von dem Perfektum der Auferstehung die Gegenwärtigkeit aussagen, heißt das, was jenseits der Zeitstrecke liegt... zur Veranschaulichung in das Formschema der Zeit pressen... Alle Aussagen über die Gegenwart und Zukunft des Christus... sind dann nur als bildhafte, uneigentliche Ausdrucksversuche für einen ewigen Inhalt zu werten, der schlechterdings nichts mit der Zeitform der Welt zu tun haben“.

²⁰⁹ W. Küneth, w. c. p. 168.

²¹⁰ “Damit wird die Zeit mit Zeitlichkeit gleichgesetzt... Diese Statuierung eines ausschließenden Gegensatzes zwischen Zeit und Ewigkeit mach eine Verbindung des ewigen Gottes mit dem zeitlichen Menschen unmöglich“, p. 168.

imperishable contents. But this way of existence is not the quietness of death. The eternity of God, like we know it through Revelation – otherwise we do not know it – it is comparable to the time, because it has entered the time; it is an infinite content of the time. Schmidt calls it plenary temporality. It is a continuous present, not a dead one but one full of movement²¹¹. So, “the eternal life of the One resurrected from dead it is not an empty of content timelessness, but it rather is a fullness of content of a filled up time²¹².”

This positive conception about the time, about the its possibility to give shapes to the eternal life, these theologians take it out of the fact that the time is created by God, so it is not a product of the sin, and therefore, there cannot exist any contradiction between time and God²¹³. The same thing results from the fact that God has revealed Himself into time²¹⁴. Of course, because the human existence which lives in time it has fallen in sin, the time has become for it a means of punishment. “From the falling come out the distress and the curse of the impermanence”²¹⁵. This state is an

²¹¹ Vollzeitlichkeit ist die Vollendung, die in sich bleibt und nicht mehr über sich hinausweist, trotzdem aber nicht in toter Ruhe erstarrt“, p. 307.

²¹¹ “Das ewige Leben des Auferstandenen ist darum nicht eine Inhaltsleere Zeitlosigkeit, sondern vielmehr die Vollinhatlichkeit einer erfüllten Zeit“, W. Küneth, p. 173.

²¹² “Die Bestimmung der Zeit als Schöpfung macht grundsätzlich jede Entgegenschätzung der Zeit Gott unmöglich“, Küneth, p. 171.

²¹³ H. Schmidt, w. c. p. 302-303.

²¹⁴ “Aus dem Fall resultiert die Not und der Fluch der Zeitlichkeit“, Küneth, w. c. P. 172.

²¹⁵ W. Küneth: „Die Auferstehungswirklichkeit des Christus ist die «neue» Zeit, d. H. Sie ist nicht zeitlose Ewigkeit und eine von dieser Welt radikal distanzierte Überzeitlichkeit, sondern ist eine zur Volendung gebrachte Zeit, eine erfüllte Zeit“, p. 113.

illness of the time. Instead of the plenary time (Vollzeitlichkeit), we have an impoverished temporality (Halbzeitlichkeit).

Jesus, by resurrecting, He has reestablished, through the restoration of a new content of life, the full time. Better said, He has brought it to the state which the time has tended to, before. "The reality of the resurrected Christ it is the new time, namely not a timeless eternity and a supra-temporality radically remote from this world, but a time brought to consummation, a filled up time". From here it turns out that, clothed in our time, we have a capacity to get closer to the sphere which the resurrected Jesus is in. And the fact of the resurrection, by being a continuous present, by being of a full temporality, one in connection with our time, the permanent contemporaneousness with Jesus it is possible. Jesus is not into an eternity with no connections with the time, and the fact of His resurrection is not exclusively into a past point of the time²¹⁶.

The new reality of the time started to grow up under the veil of the old time. Between this new reality and

²¹⁶ "Diese Einsicht hebt einerseits die Spannung zwischen der Gegenwart und dem Auferstehungsereignis in der Vergangenheit auf, da die Auferstehung ja gerade kein Element der alten Zeitlichkeit darstellt, zu dem ein solches Spannungsverhältnis denkbar wäre. Die Beziehung des Gegenwartspunktes der Zeit zu dem Auferstandenen kann darum nicht als eine gleichsam längsdimensionale oder horizontale im Sinne einer Zeitlinie verstanden werden. Andererseits beseitigt der neue Zeitbegriff die Trennung von Zeit und Ewigkeit, denn die Auferstehung besagt nicht zeitlose Ewigkeit, zu zerr nur durch Preisgabe alles Zeitlichen eine Verbindung hergestellt werden könnte... Demgegenüber besitzt die Ichzeitlichkeit des Menschen als geschaffene und sündige Zeitlichkeit eine prinzipielle Offenheit gegenüber der neuen Christuszeit als ihre Erfüllung und Aufhebung", p. 175.

Jesus, it is being done the communion. Properly called, that hidden reality is a prolongation of the reality of the resurrected Jesus, comprising in itself the ones clothed in Him.

We will avoid naming the form of the life, which Jesus is after the resurrection into, as a full temporality. But, in any case, into the views of these theologians, there is a core of truth. The life of Jesus after resurrection, like our life after we will resurrect, it cannot be without any memory, without any trace of the life on earth. Jesus, since He has got out from the unimaginable and the inaccessible abyss of the godhead, in order to be in connection with the man and, since He hasn't left the humanity after resurrection, in order to prolong this connection, He is closer to us and more ontologically related with us under all aspects, except the sin. So, because an essential structure of our life on earth it is the temporality, He is closer to us than the unrevealed God in this aspect too. If He does not live in temporality, in any case, He lives into a form closeness to our temporality, neighbor to it, compatible with it, able to ease and uphold the connection between Him and us. Jesus, the resurrected One, He places us into a temporality open to His eternity, and His eternity communicates with our temporality.

Without exiting from time, like a creational form, but by raising us over the sinful living of the time (above the state of animalism, of egotism, of rush, and of fear), what we can do only by faith, we must be able to enter the connection with His reality. He must be eternally the same, but not careless, not far from us. The reality irradiated from Him, by clothing the ones who believe in Him, it composes the Church. This Church is a whole composed by all the ones who believe in Him, but also by a reality which surrounds them, having Him in its center. It is a temporal-supra-temporal whole.

It is the place here to clarify somewhat - starting from our experience into Church - the connection of the Church with Christ.

We have insisted in the introduction to show that the transmission of the faith is done in the meeting of my intimate subject with your subject. But, this meeting does not lock up my permanent self into a restrained horizon, with only one fellow creature. I am not receiving and I am not strengthening the faith through only one subject. I do not stay in a faith report with only one man. But I reach, one by one, in such a report with many people. My faith becomes on this way increasingly firmer. If I had met in my life only one man who believes, I am not sure what would have happened with the faith received from him, under the dissolvent influence of so many people who do not believe. In front of a man who believes, it is being woken up in me the memory of other believers that I have met and it receives a new support the faith received from those ones. And among many people who confess their faith – unveiling in the same time their intimate subject – I feel it like descending into me, like a true torrent, the faith or the plus of faith, awakening myself to communion with all them in the same time. In this way, in the transmission and in the sustaining of the faith we do not encounter in a given time only two by two people – eventually three by three, because the one who transmits the faith he has received it from a different person – remaining permanently like some close pairs, but each of them enters, with one at the time, or with all them together, the communion with many other fellow humans.

It is a larger communion, constituted of the entire circle of the believers among whom the human person lives. It is called community, like a grouping of all of them who can enter, without difficulties of spiritual order, the *me-and-you* communion, or the *me-and-you* (the last *you* is at plural (E.l.t.'s n.)) in the same time;

like a grouping which the embers of the intimate communion burns into, either it raises the flames of the supreme actualization in different spots one at the time, or all over in the same time.

But the communities are not isolated either. The faith in the circle of the people which I am living in, it has came once from a man from another circle, and what permanently upholds and fortifies the faith in my community it is the conscience about other communities who believe. We all from my community we feel ourselves in connection with the community from around us and with all the communities which exist on earth, even we do not know all of them by their names and even we was not but in few of them. The conscience tells me that I am one with all the ones who believe like I believe, from all over the earth, that we are forming together a big and brotherly solidarity. I feel that my faith is due to the entire brotherhood, and that through faith I am incorporated to the whole. The rennet which links, which unites entire humanity who believes like me, it is of divine character, because not even two people could create and throw between themselves the bridge of the faith, if they were only by themselves, and there is not, also, present God. Solidary with all the ones who live and believe like me, solidary with all the ones who died into my faith, solidary with all the ones who will believe in the future like I believe, but all of us connected with God, this is the feeling which I am mastered by, having the surety that I am partaker to a spiritual community: present, past, and a future one. This is the Church.

But what makes me remaining solidary with a certain universal brotherhood of faith it is not only the fact that all its members believe, but it is also the identity and the content of their faith related to the entire content of my faith. The interest for the same content of the faith it contributes in a great measure to the unity of the Church. We have spoken more, in the

introduction, about the faith like a simple certitude about the existence of God. But into this certitude it is comprised also certain content. The conviction that God exists, it is also a conviction about God's certain way to exist and to work, especially in report with the people that we are. The belief in the existence of God would not conquer me so overwhelming, if it wasn't a belief in a God Who preoccupies Himself with me, having such features and doing such works for me, in the past, in the present, and in the future.

We are not approaching here the details details, but from this short sketching it can be understood why the believer has for a certain content of the belief the same vital interest like simply for the act of faith. When it starts to be produced a disinterest in the content of the faith, usually, it has started to melt down also the solidarity due to the act of the faith.

If now the belief like an act, it could not be born, sustained, and fortified into the man except only into a large communion, as more as the faith like content cannot be received, fortified, and transmitted by the man in its integrality, but into such a communion. The lonely man cannot warranty the intact preservation of a content of faith and he cannot establish it with his own authority. Only a community gathers the features for both these missions.

The double responsibility for conveying the belief like an act and as an unchanged content, it is assigned thereby not to the isolated human subject, who would not be capable of fulfilling that task, but, in the last analyze, to the universal community, and to the individual only like a part, like a member of that universal community. The individual transmits the faith having like reinforcements the will and the authority of the entire Church, being indebted not to work on his own. Every man is responsible for propagating the faith, but his responsibility and work grows up from the responsibility and the work of the

Church. I am not responsible by myself, but I am together responsible with all of us who build the Church. My subject is based – without losing its responsibility – into the subject of the community, which comprises me and which widens me. Two persons, tied through the *me-you* communion of love, they can be to towards a third person a unity, a subject with the same intention, exercising an all the more important influence upon that third person. Let us think at the report between parents, on one hand, and the child, on the other hand. The same is the report of a large community, like the Church is, towards each person from inside its content or from outside it. This subject, which is not anything else but the unity which is formed by the community between more persons, it is in the same time interweaved with the divine subject, because two or more people who believe, forming a communion, are carried by the same godlike intention and power. Not the people taken in themselves form the subject of the Church, because, as such, they cannot believe, but, because God is working into themselves, and God wants with their will. The subject of the Church is divine-human, the godlike will having permanently the initiative, and the wills of the people being under the influence of a common will which follows to the divine one. As a manner of fact, only existentially there are distinguished two types of will, because functionally they present like one.

Bearing in mind that in Jesus Christ existed both the divine and the human will, but into a harmonious interweaving, and Jesus, by conveying the power of faith to the apostles and through them to the followers, He has conveyed His divine-human will itself, and this is the centre of the faith of every man, but not because everyone is taken isolated; it is the nucleus of the will and of the churchly faith, on which it is connected the will of every member of the church. In this way, the Center of the Church, the Leader of the Church, Who

has the initiative, is Jesus Christ, of Whose divine-human will prolongs like a central will of the Church in all the times and in every man for he is a member of the Church. Between Jesus and the Church, there is not a space like between two realities, Christ is not beyond the Church, but He is the life, the substance, the reason, the core of the Church, like the soul is the life of the body. Like in a consummate transference, through the community of the Church we see Jesus Christ. The vast community of believers is not else but the mysterious body of the subject Jesus Christ. More than any other religious community, the Christian Church has God like its own subject Who leads to the propagation of the faith, due to the fact that He has embodied Himself, He has come close to the man into history and He has remained close after His resurrection too. The heaven where Jesus has ascended, it coincides to the intimate center of the Church.

The experience which the man who receives the faith has, that he receives the faith from God, it reaches its fullness into Christianity and it has an objective basis into the ontological closeness of the God-the Man Christ to the people.

Any member of the Church, into the fact of the transmission of the faith, he works in the name of Jesus Christ, from the assignment and with His power.

The community between many in the same time, especially when I can no longer speak with resonance about the two-by-two intimacy, it manifests and it strengthens through the leading of everybody towards their common centre, which ties them in the act of the belief, through confession and prayer. Even two individuals, who are in communion due to the faith in God, they feel the need to confess not only to each other their faith and their love from it, but also to the one who unites them. Two brothers, of whose love for each other it comes out of the common love they have

towards their parents, they feel the need, not only to talk about their parents, but also to go before them, confessing them, together, the love they feel for them. In the presence of their parents their love increases. Two persons unveil to one another the intimate subject and they enter the communion also when they are looking, with the same love and understanding, at the third one. Into him, through him, and over him, their souls and their regards pass and meet.

The confession of the faith towards the face of God, but also the confession of the sins, it is, like the prayer, a dialog with Him, a grateful and loving paying homage to Him. So that, in fact, the prayer is the means of maximum intensification of the communion from belief. All the ones who are together praying to God they feel themselves like a family, like a unity, like ones who have nothing to hide and among whom there is no distance. At the end of the prayer their regards meet twinned; they have met and discovered themselves by looking at God.

The prayer is the act of entering the full *me-you* report, because through the prayer we enter such a report with God. When, since our subject of communion, he has awakened, he has emerged, he has been brought out by the power of God, this subject does not go away immediately, but he turns easily also towards the fellow human which prays with us. The confession towards God is it the fullest unveiling of our intimacy, with the help of which, we enter the communion and, in the same time, God, to Whom we unveil ourselves, He is not far away from our fellow human who stays also into the prayer, but He is close to him, He is familiar with him, He is present also into him and, in this way, our word of love towards God passes also through our fellow human, it produces joy also to him, for he rightly feels that we are showing to him too, the love we show to God.

Let us stop for a moment in a special way, upon the

me-you report, which we enter with God through prayer. We have seen that we fell in this report the ultimate reality of a man; even the fact that our fellow human exists like a reality different from the objects which are so indifferent to us, we discover our fellow human in this report. Only when: we actually experience that a subject limits us, in a way totally superior to the way which the objects limit us in; and like a subject who definitively limits us, who is spiritual and conscious, being equal to us and not only temporarily, materially, like something subordinated still in the last analyze. Only in the *me-you* which is in the same time a report of love, we are not mystifying the reality of our fellow human.

This fact takes place, in what regards God, into prayer. Into prayer we actually make the experience of the most intensive reality of God.

The prayer is the plenitude of the faith and of the communion with God; it is the maximum closeness of God. In analogy to what you experience when you talk to the other one, when you talk to God into prayer you are no longer alone, with your thoughts which walk on doubtful paths, but He fills you up with the His mystery and with the certitude of His mystery, with the plus of power and of being which you feel that can flow infinitely to you, on the measure of your growing up and love.

But the own prayer takes power from the prayer of the others. If my faith strengthens from the faith of the other one, all the more I will take power towards prayer, towards this plenary act of the faith, from the prayer of the other one. The certitude that I am in front of God and the word of my prayer, which meets, directed towards me, His face, it grows up into me the certitude which is spread from the prayer of the other one. Increasing itself from one to another, like a communication of being which comes from above the ones who pray, the profound prayer in common it is a

great, it is a huge certitude, which raises up from the whole community, like a gift from God, but in the same time like a sign of His intense presence - a close presence - of a Parent Who embraces all His sons.

Behold why we own our faith to the Church. But not only the faith like an act, but also like a valorization of the content of the Revelation, not like a sum of knowledge which addresses to the mind, but like a continuous speaking of God towards us, being intensified through this the faith.

H. Frick, though Protestant, he draws in one of his writings²¹⁷, to this conclusion: the word of the Holy Scripture does not open itself to us like a word of God, but only into the Church's atmosphere of faith. Who does not live in the Church's ambiance of faith and approaches the Holy Scripture with the simple natural understanding, he will take the words from it like nominations of some meanings, which he will judge them critically, treating the Bible like a human book. The godlike power of this book it will be unveiled to him only if the words sound to him also like present impartations of God; only then the Ghost of God will walk on above of the Scripture and its reading will be also something else then an intellectual occupation. Only when the speaker is present and the words have not become self-standing realities, we enter the communion with Him through the words, otherwise it is put to work, in an individualistic state, only our intellect. But only the faith of the community, especially on the moments of its manifestation, it creates into me the certitude of the presence of God like a *You of mine*, and of the community, Who speaks through the words of the Scripture, to me and to all those who are present there, by connecting us, even

²¹⁷ Wissenschaftliches und pneumatisches Verständnis der Bibel, Tübingen, 1927. To see also another writing of his: Mythos, Ideogram und Wort, in „Marburger theologischer Studien“, 3, 1931, Klotz Verlag, Gotha.

more, through the common experience, through the common destiny which He unveils and imposes us. Frick considers like an exceeded and wrong stage the individualistic reading of the Scripture, in the searching for the simple meanings of the words, a thing which was practiced in Protestantism to the mutilations of the Scripture and to the evaporation of its divine character:

“In the second stage it has caused a limitation the fact that it was taken the word only like naming (Name). We must consider like a progress the fact that in the third stage it is taken the word like expression (Ausdruck). It is in this stage still a limitation, because it is not given enough attention to the character of the word like impartation, like communication (Mitteilung) ... It must be considered especially the living relation between speaker and listener, therefore between *me* and *you*, between whom the word creates, like a bridge from a side to the other side, the communication. The richest kind of relation of the «word» it is hardly the full dialogue. The words of a dialogue cannot be explained neither as a simple naming of the things, about what is upon which is speaking, nor like a simple expression of a personal spirit which wants to unveil itself. To the just exegesis of a dialogue it belongs especially the understanding for the reciprocal movement between *me* and *you*... The Scripture is a dialogue between the divine *Me* and the man's *you*”²¹⁸.

But for God to unveil Himself to us like an interlocutor, it doesn't depends on us, but on Him. “We can by ourselves to show the scientific meaning and we can even force ourselves to get closer to the moral seriousness of a strict research of the truth. But, the ultimate and the proper thing we cannot to obtain it. This is: the descent of the Holy Ghost. Because the prayer is not a method with an effect which we can

²¹⁸ P.21-22.

surely anticipate, count, neither is an exegetic recipe. In order to establish the prayer like the first request of the just interpretation of the Scripture, it means, before all, to confess our human helplessness to reach the right understanding, namely a pneumatological understanding of the Bible. The God's Ghost alone, and not our spirit, He is the one Who opens the just meaning of the word: the interior hearing of a word of repentance and the divine grace which it is sent in present to our ear, the factual introducing of the man in the divine dialogue...

This pneumatological understanding of the Bible it cannot be forced by any human effort, and even much less through the exegetic art of a lonely individual"²¹⁹.

Only through faith it can be heard and understood the biblical word, like a present utterance of God towards me.

“As, though, this belief is not a private thing, even if – from psychological perspective – it penetrates as «internally» as it can, we realize that the Ghost belongs in a necessary way to the community. Who says Ghost, says Church (wer geist sagt, sagt Kirche) and the Church exists only because the Spirit blows within it. To «pneumatologically» understand the Scripture it means this: to reach in the situation to hear speaking

²¹⁹ W. c. p. 28. This pneumatological understanding of the Scripture it is considered as the only capable to know its reality, also by Ewald Burger (*Der lebendige Christus*, p. 195-207). Otherwise, the Scripture remains external letter, or means of awakening of some entirely subjective internal sentimental movements. Only the faith, which experiences the meeting with the living Christ also today like an objective reality, different from *me*, it notices the content of the Scripture, what the Scripture wants to tell to us, what the ones who wrote the Scripture experienced. Our belief, however, we have it from the preaching of the fellow human, who believes, from the community which we live into.

the common Ghost of the believer Church, namely now and here... The pneumatological exegesis belongs to the high calling to the Church”.

In the cult and in any other form of proclaiming the word, in the entire atmosphere of the community of belief which surrounds us, which upholds and penetrates the lonely Christian, there is the place where it can be produced the dialogue between God and man... there where the research of the Scripture by the lonely reader it passes into the praying mediation and in the state of availability into which the man says: “Speak to me, Lord, your servant listens to You”²²⁰.

The belief reaches its full intensity, and it is at its filling up source, in the prayer community of the Church, for here the believer is dominated by the certitude that God is present at the second person, into a role of an interlocutor to him. But into this community it is valued the content of the Revelation too, and the content of the faith, for God communicates here just the being and the will, by showing them like unchanged in all times. Here is how the Holy Scripture, unveils this character of itself, only through the Church, and only through the Church it is a word actually spoken by God. Only through the Church, the

²²⁰ God, by being the plenary existence, He cannot be experienced as such when we are talking about Him at the third person, because then it diminishes into us the overwhelming feeling of His existence. The reality is the most fully felt at the first and at the second person. The second person, so the reality not identical to our person, we feel it fuller when it manifests like at the first person - namely when we are listening to him and not when we are speaking to him so. We are experiencing God in the most adequate measure, into His existence of supreme richness and intensity, when we are hearing Him telling to us: “I Am That I Am”. Here is a reason why into the Church it is more principal **that the Scripture to be read** into the hearing of the believers, rather than to be read separately by each believer.

Revelation - met in a precise moment of the history, which, like a temporal moment it belongs to the past - it has a permanent presence. God spoke in a given moment in time, but in the Church He speaks always the same words. Due to the Church, the Revelation is not stolen by the torrent of the time and driven to the past, but it remains continuously present, like a godlike act, because into the Church God remains present too.

They speak into the theological and churchly circles, like on a well known thing, about the dependence of the Scripture on the Church, because the ones who have recorded this part of the apostolic preaching in writing, they were members of the first churchly communities and these communities guaranteed through their testimony the provenance of the writings of the New Testament from persons with authority, from the churchly communities' bosom, and the identity of the content from them to the apostolic preaching, warranty on the basis of which the Church constituted the canon of the holy writings. But this external aspect of the report of dependence, into which stays the Holy Scripture towards the Church, it doubles through the interior aspect, manifested into the fact that the intimate certitude about the godlike character of the Scripture and about the actuality of the Revelation from it, through the experience of the present living of God, it cannot be born and upheld but through the bosom of the Church's community of faith and prayer. The fact that also in the sectarian communities are born such certitudes, it does nothing anything else but to confirm the truth of the Church, the uninterrupted community from the time of the Apostles, which it could not be preserved without - in the bosom of the humanity - the conscience of the provenance and the godlike character of the Scripture. The sectarian communities reflect in their fragmentary existence, of a turbid mixture of the community spirit

with the one individualistic and anti-traditionalistic vanity, in a distorted manner, the community of the Church, bearing witness for it.

But if in the community of the Church it is experienced the plenary certitude that God speaks now the word from the Scripture towards the ones gathered in the Church, this will mean that not the reading in isolation of the text of the Scripture it produces to us this state in a consummate way, but the hearing of the word from the Scripture spoken with a loud voice to the hearing of the entire community – then we feel better that God it is a subject Who limits us, by meeting us from beyond us, and not a quality of our inward states, and the community only in this way it can be achieved that all the gathered ones are focused on the hearing of the same voice, of the same commandment hanging on the same Master²²¹.

If it is like that, it won't matter the way the word of the Scripture is uttered, namely if it read or told by heart. It is even more natural when it is said by heart. We have said that the faith like act and content it propagates through the certitude of the man. When the godlike word is said by heart, the one who speaks the word to the hearing of the others, he can give another accent to his certitude. The prophets did not read the

²²¹ God, being the plenary existence, He cannot be experienced as such when we are talking about Him at the third person, because then diminishes into us the overwhelming feeling of His existence. The reality it is felt most completely into the first and into the second person. On the second person, namely the reality not identical with our *self*, we feel when it is manifested like a first person, so when she speaks towards us, not when we address to her, so into our obedience, not into our words. We experience God in the most adequate measure, into His supreme existence of richness and intensity, when we hear His saying: "I Am That I Am". Here is a motif for which into the Church it is more principled **to be read** the Scripture into the hearing of the believers, that to be read by each one on them.

unveilings which God give them, from a text to the auditors, but after the introduction: "The Lord declares", they were proceeding to the reproduction of His words, like God Himself was speaking them. It is given a much powerful impression that God Himself says again His words, when the one who transmits them he doesn't read them but he speaks them.

At the beginning of the Church all the words of Jesus and about Him, they were preached orally.

Only in time, for different reasons, among which it is also the one of better preserving the exact form of some preaching, it was recorded a part of the words or of some apostles in writing. But a part of them have continued to be spoken by mouth and the one recorded in writing, not through the individual reading, they had to exercise their full power, but through the uttering with a loud voice, into the community.

The oral preaching is from the beginning and it is the one that continues having the most important role into the community of the Church, and not the reading.

But there is not about the oral preaching, invented at will and therefore being in a continuous change, but it is that of repeating of the same Revelation, namely of all that was spoken by Jesus Christ and by Apostles, who stayed around Him and who were inspired by the Holy Ghost to know then or later somewhat from the mystery of His will and being - and the repeating of the same preaching it is the Tradition. At the beginning, the Church had the entire Revelation in the form of Tradition. In time, a part of it was recorded in the text of the Holy Scripture, and later, the other part into the writings of the Holy Fathers, but this one in a mixture with interpretations which constitutes the churchly Tradition, unlike the godlike Tradition, which is a part of the Revelation.

Either it is recorded like a whole, or it would not be, the content of the Revelation must be continuously

repeated with the word of the mouth in front of the community. The Revelation regarded under this aspect it is tradition. For we are repeating all that was said before all the forerunners in the churchly community, we are into tradition. But for this repeating is done, through the mouth of the one who speaks, by God Himself, yesterday and today the Same, the tradition is a living force, a continuous novelty. The tradition is the permanent presence of the unchangeable God, into time and into history. If the will of God had not been like being the same, in the form of the tradition, we would have lacked an important support of the faith in Him. God is not in a seen manner with all the generations, or with the whole history, but He is there in the form of the tradition. The Revelation itself, like God's unveiling in time, it cannot be shared to all the people but in the form of the tradition. The tradition is the eternal novelty into the big river of the relentless passing of the time. Only like tradition, a gesture of God, by touching a certain moment of the history, it touches the entire history, and it has efficiency over all the following times.

The tradition is my connection with the people from before me and with the heaven, in the same time. The tradition is a living force of the present for it unites me with the heaven, but not with the heaven of a present without horizon, but of one which makes me grateful to the past and it keeps me in connection with the past. The tradition is the eternity in time, the only form of the eternity which does not annul the time, but it values it. The tradition is the same living voice of God sounding on every time, overflowing in souls the infinity of meanings and faith. In the identity of the voice it stays the identity of the Revelation and into the infinity of the contents it stays the possibility of a continuous novelty to the understanding of the people.

But in the community of the Church there isn't only God speaking, but the community too. The voice of the

community is the prayer. The community prays to God to give it power to hear Him speaking. But also to thank Him for hearing Him and to promise Him that the community's will fulfills His will. God speaks through the repeating of the infinite Revelation, and the man answers through prayer. These are also the two constitutive parts of the cult, which is a dialogue between God and man. Prayer - into a wider sense a grateful effort of the man to put himself in the *me-you* circuit with God, in order to notice what God speaks - it is also any meditation, it is any effort to understand the content of the Revelation. The whole this second part it is the churchly Tradition, unlike the godlike one. This one multiplies, orients itself according to the needs and the problems of each time, according to what occurs, on the plan of the reality, as others and others preoccupations, methods and forms of showing. Through these ones, the man speaks in his concrete needs, by constantly changing ones, touched by the amber finger of God. It is the reaction of the changing history to the unchangeable word - but one infinite in meaning - of God.

It is understood that between the different phases of the churchly tradition there is not any discontinuity, but a close connection. This entire tradition is a unity in variety, the will of the churchly community being also in its praying activity a divine-human will, by having the cooperation of the Holy Ghost.

We have spoken about the responsibility of the Church for the preservation and for the propagation of the divine Revelation, a responsibility which burdens each member of the Church.

But the mission of preaching it must be entrusted in a special way to some of the community's members, for the people are also limbs of the history, living into the body and having to occupy themselves with the things necessary to their existence, they cannot exclusively dedicate their spiritual powers to the

preaching of the Revelation and to their preparing for this work. There must be destined certain persons to the role of bearing the Church's permanent responsibility for transmitting the Revelation.

These are the group of the chosen ones ("the clergy") for the exclusive role as preachers of the Revelation. They do not take from themselves this power of the fully awakened subjects to the responsibility of the preaching of the Revelation, neither others members of the Church give them this responsibility, because neither those ones have this responsibility. This responsibility cannot come but from the intensive depth of the Church, from its subject, Who is Jesus Christ. He must stay a lot of time around the ones who are in the state and in the role of the subjects of the churchly responsibility. From them the believers must receive the entire content of the Revelation like certitude of faith. The whole this preparation is crowned through ordination, which brings them the intensity of the Church, through the mediation of the subjects who live in full responsibility for the propagation of the faith and for the salvation of the people, the power to be also they in this role. Like this did Christ to the Apostles, and the Apostles did these things to the ones whom they called to the episcopate or to priesthood, and this is what has been done until today, within Church. In order to be priest or bishop, something special must come upon the man, from above, after a serious period of preparation. This something is the divine grace of the ordination. Into their responsibility it is incorporated the responsibility of the Church. The entire Church upholds them, so the Church works properly through them. That is why, in the cases when the conscience of these persons is not at the height of the responsibility which they were burdened with, the Church stays for them, it gives the works which a certain person does in the Church's name - in a direct way - force and

efficacy. The Church is committed to cover with its powers the churchly words and works of a person whom the Church has placed through rule, in the role of the bearer of its responsibilities.

In this way, the resurrected Jesus Christ clothes in His reality - the resurrected reality - increasingly greater parts of the historical humanity, being contemporary with its development like church. The intimacy between Him and the believers of the Church it is not accomplished like a phenomenon of the nature, but through the spirit, through the personal communication, the man getting righteous through faith, and Him waiting for the man and urging him with the love.

The new reality, which it is bathed and constituted the unity of the Church in, like a communion between people and between them and Jesus Christ, it is the love of the Savior, manifested also through His sacrifice on Golgotha.

And the love is not an organic substance, but a connection between subjects. Through love it is overcome the difference of the existence plans between people and Christ. The faith makes them surpassing the spreading force of the time, by concentrating them on the direction of a living of a full present, dominated and filled up with the tension for Jesus Christ. The faith makes them stretching over the sinful form of the time towards the reality of Christ, and through His love, Jesus Christ, in fact, He comes closer and He enters the connection with them, and He overflows Himself into their form of life.

The overflowing of the new reality of Jesus Christ through the love that was built through sacrifice, when there is the concentrated faith, especially, it is accomplished, especially, through the Holy Mysteries.

And this is because into the Holy Mysteries, more than in any other moment, the entire Church prays together with the believer and it confesses. Where is

the faith of everybody, and the love of everyone together, and towards Jesus Christ, there His love is more penetrating, and more efficient, and there His grace overflows with the whole its power.

But in this book we cannot afford to treat widely about the Church and about all its aspects. We highlighted only a few considerations on the Church, as many as were absolutely needed in connection with our theme. We want only to accentuate that between the Church and the ascended Jesus, there is no separation. The place where He is, and the heart of the Church, they coincide. The Church, in this sense, it stretches from earth to heavens. The humanity of Jesus is elevated in the same time in the central intimacy of the ones who believe, in the supreme closeness to everybody. That is why, one cannot say that the grace of the Holy Mysteries, including of the ordination, it comes from Christ Who would stay somewhere isolated from Church, but, by coming from Christ, it is coming from the depth of the Church²²².

Thus, we understand the truth that Jesus suffers together with all the members of the Church, purifying their sufferance and making it easier. By being Him the intimate basis of the Church and of the spiritual life of every one of us, He is in the same time, the bearer of all our pains.

We told before that through ascent it has been instituted, to the rudder of the Universe, together with

²²² The dogmatists say that the grace of the Holy Mysteries it is “deposited” into the Church (Andrutsos, w. c. p. 235), that the Church is the “kingdom of the grace”, (Makarios, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, translated by Gherasim Timus, the second Tome, Bucharest, 1887, p. 239). But the divine grace cannot be cogitated like an entity of energy standing by itself, separated from Christ. Where the divine grace is, there Christ is, like a source of the divine grace. The Church is the depository of the divine grace, like one which is into Christ or it has Christ like a basis of its entire being and power.

God-the Man, a human heart. We can add now that, because this helmsmen of the Universe is the Head of the Church, and the Church's heart, the Church itself participate somehow to this supreme dignity. Jesus said that the one who believes with power he can move the mountains from their place. But this is only for into the faith of that one it is concentrated the belief of the entire Church and the power of Christ Who is into the Church.

X. 5. The Leading of the Work of Salvation

Through everything Jesus Christ did until His ascent on the right hand of the Father, He laid the basis of our salvation; He objectively saved us, like the dogmatics says. He gave satisfaction, through His sacrifice, to the godlike justice, He defeated through His resurrection the power the death had upon the human nature, and He received through His ascent and through His placing on the right hand of the Father, the whole godlike power in order to put it at the disposition of the attraction of all the people in the region situated above death and sin.

Now it starts the work of fructification of the objective salvation through the personal conquest of the people.

Serge Bulgakov sees only from this moment of the placing of Jesus Christ on the right hand of the Father, starting His kingly dignity. On earth, Jesus would have exercised only the prophetic calling and the hierarchal service, the first one until the transfiguration like introduction to the passions, and the second one, after that point. Only since Jesus would have shown Himself like a King on earth, rather prefiguring His future glory, namely when He entered Jerusalem. The wonders, the resurrection, and the ascent, they wouldn't have been acts of the kingly dignity, but the

first ones of His prophetic calling, and the last ones of His ministration as high priest service.

It is true that in the activity of Jesus there are distinguished the three stages mentioned by Bulgakov each of them being predominated, especially, from one of these three dignities. But these dignities are so interweaved and reciprocally conditioned, than, at least in the subsidiary, there always exist and manifest the others two. When Jesus teaches like a prophet, the crowds feel the kingly power from His word. On the other hand, His word is a priestly service, a prayer addressed to the Father. Through His passions He brings sacrifice not only like a high priest, but also He teaches like a prophet and He defeats the sin and the death like a king. The entire spiritual force from Him, starting with the moment of the embodiment, and manifested into a way or another, it has the three aspects, which are all the most sublime in the world.

The opinion of Serge Bulgakov seems to have two powerful reasons:

1. Jesus Himself declared near to His ascent: "All the power has been given to me in heaven and on earth". Until then, so, He wouldn't have had the kingly power. He would have had the power like almighty God, like the One Who exercised the power in the quality of supporter and providential God of the world, but not like an embodied hypostasis, worker of the salvation through the method of the spiritual conquest of the man. And this last one, it is envisaged when is about the three dignities of Jesus.

2. Jesus is recognized like Lord of the souls, and He becomes a subject of the cult, only after His ascent, when "His Kingdom" appears too: the Church.

In what regards the last consideration it may be told that, neither like a prophet-teacher was Jesus recognized in all His fullness while He stayed on earth. His high priesthood was even more exercised while surrounded by the people's understanding's darkness.

Despite this, they were really unfolded on earth, but into a plan of objectivity. In some measure, in a clear-obscure way, for their work and sense were though noticed by a group of people. But the result of their objective work, accompanied by the understanding of that small group of people, had such efficiency, then, after His ascent to heaven, the entire huge meaning of the dignities exercised on earth in the objective hidden it entered in the light showing and into the recognizing. But the extent the prophetic and hierarchal work of Jesus were understood in, on earth from, it was understood, especially, on the basis of the power that He spread over His disciples.

Consequently, the kingly power Jesus had on earth, in some extent was noticed too. What was differently produced through the ascent it is the elevation of all the three dignities into a sphere of light and of recognition from the part of the people. All three dignities continue in heaven too. Jesus continues to intervene for us and to teach us through the Holy Ghost. It is true that what it determines, after the ascent, to be Jesus recognized in all His three dignities, it is the power manifested in resurrection, in the ascent and, especially, in the efficiency the Holy Ghost has upon hearts, namely through the kingly dignity. Though, through this manifestation of the kingly dignity, He does not unveil Himself to us like a king, but like a high priest and prophet. The power He plucks His recognition with, from us, it is the kingly power. But through it we see Him not only like a king who masters upon our hearts, but also like a high priest who seeks our salvation through His everlasting love. Even more, the kingly power, which He plucks His recognition with, from us, and which He masters upon us with, it grows up from His hierarchal sacrifice from history and from His hierarchal love from heaven. The kingly element is the power to make Him recognized and, in this regard, the placing on the right hand of the

Father, by making Him master upon increasingly larger circles, it means the beginning of a new phase into the life of Jesus Christ. But what we find at Him through this recognition, it is His hierarchal and prophetic fervor. All of them are transposed through His ascent into an atmosphere of glory. The glory is the kingly fullness, but into the glory it is seen Jesus into the fullness of His saving work. If He had presented Himself after His placing on the right hand of the Father only like a king and not like a high priest too, and like a prophet too, He would have been an imposing and almighty king, like God is in His quality of upholder, and not a Savior King, Who works through spiritual means upon the spirit of the man. He wouldn't have been King into the saving mission, King on the basis of the custody to save the world. Only just because He is King and Lamb, in the same time, His kingly dignity to which He was elevated like man too, it is a different one than His kingly dignity into the frame of the work of upholding of the world. The power which Jesus Christ have been given with, through His placing on the right hand of the Father, it is not the relocation of Him into the function of almighty upholder and director the world. From this He has never got out. This is the designation of Jesus like Savior with the whole godlike power, the putting of this power at His disposition for another goal and to be used with another method. Until then God was leading through force like an Almighty, upholding the laws of the nature and of the human individual and of the social life, without searching for the conquest of the souls.

Now, a divine person who has embodied Himself and Who suffered for people, because of His love for them, He receives - in His quality as their brother, Who wants to save them through the work of the love from their hearts - the whole power. The second godlike person is placed at the disposition of this work. It is not forsaken the work of the world's leading through

the laws of the nature and of the social order, but, in addition to this work, it receives the whole godlike power the new work of the salvation of the people, through the method of love which whispers compelling inspirations and it pours, through this, power, out of its being, in the heart. The work of leading of the world, through the implacable force which upholds the nature and the social order incorporated into State, it remains only a substrate condition for the fulfillment of the savior work of the people. That is why, Jesus Christ, like King Savior, He takes the place of supreme honors and power. The method of world's government through direct almightiness it cedes the main place to the savior method.

Now Jesus is known by the people like a King, but like a King Who imposes us through His sufferance from earth and through His lenient care from heaven, like a King-Hierarch. His power is the Love. The Holy Ghost, with His all penetrating godlike power, He does no longer stay only in the service of the life and of the natural perfection, but He puts Himself into the service of the savior work of Jesus Christ, by making His love to penetrate to the heart of the human subjects, by working into their interior in order to make them sensitive to the love of Jesus Christ.

This idea, that the kingly dignity of Jesus it is also a service and not a manifestation of forced almightiness, it is largely developed by Serge Bulgakov, without seeing instead what gives this kingly dignity of Jesus a character of service, namely just its interweaving with the high priest service. The providential king is Son from ever and ever, and now He has become King-Savior, King-Lamb, King Who works through the force of the love into brotherly hearts. This is the power given Him at the ascent (Mt. 28: 18). But this kind of power was held into a certain sense by Jesus, also on earth. Bulgakov recognizes like a kingly act on earth only the entry into Jerusalem.

Though, abstracting it from the other acts, even through His word of teaching, Jesus manifested His power upon the souls, like otherwise Bulgakov himself confesses (p. 455).

Jesus, seated to the right hand of the Father, He did not finish His savior mission, but He continues it especially on this third ministration, by bringing His world under dominion. The Apocalypse impressively describes this fight of Jesus, fought both by Him and by His followers for the victory upon the powers of the evil. "The imposition of the kingdom it is accomplished into the fight for the kingdom with the master of this world, with the forces of the Antichrist, which fight the forces of Christ. It would be impossible the adversity of Antichrist to refer to the mastery of God-the Creator upon the creation. The adversity of Antichrist would be impossible to refer at the dominion of God-Creator over the creation. Here is about the kingdom of Jesus-the Man into world and He works in this regard with the godlike almightiness from this world, not with an army and not through force, but with the godlike Ghost" (p. 447).

The final result of this fight, namely the imposing of the Kingdom of God through Word and Ghost, it is indicated in 1 Co. 15: 22-28: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruit; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under his feet. But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things

under Him, that God may be all in all”.

So Jesus continues His work of salvation of the word, He continues to do this ministration to the Father through the three functions which He has assumed at embodiment and, especially, through the one of the King-Savior, which is different from the one of King-Providential, on the basis of which He is not fulfilling a ministration to the Father. The target of this ministration like King-Lamb it is to bring back the creation into the intimacy of God, to remove the border of the sin and of the death which is between the world and the Creator, in order again God to be in everything. This conquest of the world it cannot be manifested by forcedly almightiness through the majestic dignity. That is why the Son of the Father humbled Himself, by making Himself King-Lamb and striving in the course of the history to bring the souls back, through love and persuasion, at first under His dominion like King-Lamb and then to submit them and Himself under the dominion of the Father. Then the Son will end His mission and He will no longer fulfill this intermediary role between the world and the Father. Will the Son then disrobe Himself of the three ministrations and intermediary dignities, which He has accomplished the bringing of the world to the Father through? From the Epistle towards Hebrews it would turn out that He remains forever high priest; like so, it would turn out from the Apocalypse, which continues to speak not only about God, but also about the Lamb, even after the end of this world, and “the tabernacle of God is with men” and when “God will be with them” (Rev. 21: 3, 23). But the Son will have the three dignities only like titles of glory for the word that He has accomplished, like a crown of His endeavor, basing the gratefulness of the saved ones towards Him also like a crowning of the definitive union between God and people, and not like a continuation of the work of salvation.

Once reestablished the union of love between God and creation, God won't appear to the world saved and made like His kingdom, only like a forceful providential, but also like a loving Father. For the saved ones, not being necessary the punishing function, there is no longer a difference between the form which God shows Himself into, like a Savior and God, and like All-Upholder. The All-Upholder Father clothes Himself up in appearance of love. The Son unveils us the Father, like He truly is. This function of true unveiling of the Father it is fulfilled by the Son in the entire course of the history. Where He descends on heart, He descends together with the Father.

The consummation of this unveiling of God like a loving Father, it equals to the full submission of the creation under His feet, out of love, the defeat of the death and of the sin. So, in fact, far from renouncing to the image which the Son conquered the creation with, the Father too will cloth Himself up in that image.

This fight of the Son for the conquest of the world it is a fight of a king, but a King-Servant, and this fight lasts to the end of this age. As He conquers ground, He grows up into His kingly glory, but it also comes closer the moment which the Father's kingdom be installed on.

Of course, the Son in His fight for the conquest of the world through the Ghost of His mouth, a fight which He wages from the right hand of the Father, this fight enjoys the godlike power which He receives from the Father. That is way it is spoken into the quoted place from the Epistle towards the Corinthians, also about the Father, like about the One Who submits everything under the feet of the Son. The same thing is said into the Epistle towards Hebrews 10: 12-13, like a commentary to the Psalm number 2, 8: "(Heb. 10: 12-13) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God. From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made

his footstool". The history, like a wide frame into which the salvation is being consummated, it is being led by the providential and the almighty God. The troubles coming upon the people, the suggestions that are offered them by the situations of the natural life, the historical events: all of them serve like reasons for and advices towards receiving of the word administered by the Church in the name of Jesus Christ like God Savior. In this way not only the history needs the Church, but also the church needs the history, in order to conquer the souls of the people for Jesus Christ.

This sense of the history, namely of being the environment which is carried the fight of Jesus Christ into, in order to restore the rule over His kingdom, it was unveiled in the Apocalypse. The Apocalypse - meaning unveiling - it is the apocalypse of the history, like an unveiling of the internal sense of the history²²³. The big book, which is not opened except by the Lamb who sits "like stabbed" on the throne, it is the future content of the history. When He takes the book - the One Who sits on the throne - He is appointed in the ministration of the King-Savior, and He starts the fight for imposing His kingdom (chapters: 5, 6, 7). This happens in the moment of the ascent to heaven and of the placing on the right hand of the Father. Jesus, though, He does not fight isolated for conquering the world, but through the ones on earth who believe in Him, those ones manifesting His power as high priest and king. He has made those: together kings and priests with Himself (Rev. 5: 10).

With the opening of the first seal it begins the history full of the problem of salvation and of the fight for Christ. This fight takes place in the same time, also into the world of the ghosts from earth. The fight gradually increases. As time progresses, the forces of

²²³ Bulgakov, w. c. p. 448.

the evil become more radical and in increasingly terrible offensives, because the man who is used like and instrument by them, he increases in passions and refinement. That is why, the fight between Christ and Satan, on the measure on which it gets bitter and it gets closer to the culminating moments, it is accompanied by increasingly more history's turbulences and by cataclysms into the nature.

Because the opposition of the evil is becoming increasingly radical, the man is forced to decide in a categorical manner to be with or against Christ. They cannot live into a compromise. In this way, the main goal of the big and of the small Apocalypse (Mt. 24-25, Mk. 13, Lk. 21) it is the one to determine the believers towards manhood, towards watchfulness and towards resilience into trials. The history of the Church, into the frame of the general history, it will not be an idyll – like the first Christians may have been thought – but an endless fight.

The Savior described, in general lines, the route of the future history and the signs which will anticipate the end, but He did not mentioned chronologically the moment of the end, declaring that only the Father knows that day (Mt. 13, 22). “No matter how this declaration of the Son it will be explained, it remains incontestable that here is announced a certain impossibility of the prediction of the day of the end... This impossibility can have diverse explanations: it means that this transcendent fact cannot be comprised in the human empirical consciousness, or that the man doesn't need this knowledge, or – and this explanation is the more important – that the arrival of the end it hangs on the participation and on the work of the man, fulfilled on the basis of his liberty, which must not be paralyzed or even affected by this unnecessary and unfit knowledge to his power (in the same way it is hidden, into the lack

of knowledge, the personal death of the man)²²⁴. From the fact that the end cannot be known, the Scripture pulls out for people the advice: "(Mt. 24: 44) Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh".

The participation of the believers to the work of spreading the God's kingdom, of raising up of the Church, it is done not only through the word, but also through facts. As substantial the facts are, which somebody contributes with to the rising of the Church, as big will be the honor he will enjoy on the Day of Judgment. The growth of the God's Kingdom it is a common work of the mankind under the leadership of Jesus Christ. "In this general perspective it is impossible to understand «the human facts», namely the Kingdom with Christ and the participation to His kingly ministration in a transcendent-eschatological manner only, like a basis for the «reward» or, by and large, for the personal fate of one or another of the souls. This participation means also an apocalyptic – historical fusion, being considered like deeds of God on earth and into history among people"²²⁵.

"After the embodiment the whole humanity of the mankind it is of Jesus and everything that is good in it belongs to Christ. He works into the mankind not only through the influence of His teaching and of His face, through the power of conviction, but also through Himself, through the unmediated power of His, through somewhat internal forcing, because "(Ga. 3: 27) For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" and Christ lives into him (2: 20)... on the measure of this kingdom of His over and through people, it is somehow defeated the Ascent in its sense of remoteness of Christ to world, into which, according to His own promise, He still is always present, now and

²²⁴ S. Bulgakov, w. c. p. 455.

²²⁵ S. Bulgakov, w. c. p. 458.

forever” (S. Bulgakov, p. 458).

S. Bulgakov goes even further, framing into this work of the history, led by Christ, the entire mankind, even the unbelievers. Through the fact that Christ has not taken an individual human nature but the human nature into its generality, His power connects together the mankind and the entire history. “That is why, not only the ones who knew Him into His life, but also the ones who didn’t known Him, and even the ones who deny Him, all of them are partakers to Him and subjected to Him. The history of the mankind after Christ it is not only the history of the Christian mankind, but also of the humanity of Christ... The work of this community, contradictory and divided, includes in its synthesis the work of Jesus too”. That is why the mankind will be judged like a whole, with its common work. “This together being and work with Christ, it does not abolish the personal liberty of the man, it does not make the man a blind tool. Though, through His internal power, the humanity of Christ leads everyone on their paths and it integrates their deeds to the common work, by preparing through them the path towards the transfiguration of the world or towards the end of this eon”²²⁶.

To the eventual objection that this is a deterministic conception, which transforms the power of Christ into a natural one, S. Bulgakov mentions that through such “natural” power it can be understood a physical principle or a metaphysical principle, not only a person in relations with other persons. As proof he brings the resurrection of everybody, even of those who did not believe in Jesus. These ones are also determined by the power of Jesus, by the new energy brought by Him into world. “All the people are subjected to the resurrection, no matter the personal relation of each of them with Christ”. “They resurrect not on the basis of a creator

²²⁶ S. Bulgakov, w. c. p. 459.

act of God the Almighty, but on the power of their internal relation with Christ, the first One resurrected from dead, this connection having, though, into the given case, not a personal character but a natural one”.

If even the sinful ones resurrect on the basis of an internal connection with Jesus Christ, this connection exists from before, from the course of the historical life. “If the entire natural mankind resurrect into Christ, why would not be tied to Him also in the historical life? This is because the life, the death, and the resurrection are united and this connection could not be reduced only to the resurrection, into which case this would be an external case, without any internal basis into the human life related to Christ, a *deus ex machina* which forcedly imposes to the human nature”²²⁷.

This global vision of S. Bulgakov can comprise into itself a truth only in a certain interpretation. The connection of the believers with Jesus Christ, though based on the ontological closeness, on the basis of the identity of nature between them and Christ, it is actualized through an element which form the content of the personal relation. The closeness of Christ it is in a certain way perceived by the unbelievers too, if not otherwise, at least like a master present in some of the fellow humans, like a general content of the society and of the human history. In front of this presence, they adopt a hostile attitude; somehow, Christ embodies for them a personal adversary. But the adversity is a kind of connection between the human persons and a factor which determines their behavior and the content of the future historical development. The man learns from the One he hates, that he is positively influenced in his preoccupations. The adversaries go together into the evolution of their contents of life. By fighting each

²²⁷ S. Bulgakov, p. 460.

other, they borrow a lot of preoccupations and problems, but they give them another answers. The same content is in both of them, but one sees it in a certain way, and the other one into the up side down version. The progress of the good ones into the understanding of the Revelation and in living the Revelation it is conditioned right by the progress of an atheistic thinking. And the progress of the Antichristian ideology and hate, it is conditioned right by the Christianity.

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Applying to the concrete development of the historical life, the things we said, by and large, about the leading of the world, by Jesus Christ, towards the target of its transfiguration. into the eschatological union with God, and by considering the mentioned distinction between the kingly function of God, like Maker and Upholder, and between this function of His like Savior, we can better understand the destination of the history and the mixing of diverse plans which compose the history.

The supreme target of the history is the salvation. The history makes sense only in the light of this target has.

Into the history there are mixing three plans of the reality. There is the plan of the nature, or of the physical laws, the plan of the juridical relations amongst people or of the social order embodied into the State, and the plan of the loving communion with God and with the fellow humans or the Church. The first two are governed by God like a Providential One. It is the order of the physical and social legality which must be observed by every man, if he does not want to be crushed by its reaction. The history can be composed only of these two plans too. But then it makes no sense. Living according to the laws of the

nature, and into a state order, it still does not mean living for a certain goal. Neither a man nor a collectivity can live with the thought that they have no other meaning but to obey the order of the nature and of the society, for a number of years, and then to die. Usually, when only two these plans are recognized like history's constitutive factors, the culture is presented like a goal of it. But the culture is either the sum of the experiences and of the conclusions regarding the adaptation of the man to the legality or to the nature - or of its legality to the necessities of the man, together with the sum of the experiences and of the trying of reciprocal accommodation of the people amongst them for the keeping of the social order like an elementary condition of life - or it is the sum of the endeavors of the man to connect the fate of his own being to the values which pass over the margins of his earthly existence, projecting himself into eternity. In the first case the culture is not but a searching for the fullest order and, so, it has no other goal which to exceed the simple passing of the existence in the frame of it. In the second case, it betrays the aspiration of the man to find a goal to the physical and moral order, into which generations after generations are set to live. When the culture would be limited only to the preoccupations of the first case, no matter how much it would be modified the history from a time to another, it still would be conceived like having a static character. So the following question will be an appropriate one: why it continues the string of the generations?

Instead, while the culture is considered like the product of the human longing to tie the being on eternal values and realities, if there would had been no possibility to fulfill this longing, the man would have been proven like the slave of an illusion and then the culture he creates it would have had, at its turn, an illusory substance and eternity. The living into the physical and social legality it wouldn't have had a

purpose either in the second case - at most an illusory one.

The history, though, it cannot be conceived without a real goal. It is too strong the finalist tension from within it, too dominated by the tendency towards a goal in any domain and in any collectivity, to not be any other end but the collapsing into dust, one by one, of each generation, after a short living into the legality of the nature and of the State.

The goal of the history is shown in the third plan - a plan superior to the two kingdoms of legality - in the kingdom of the divine grace, leading towards the eternal life. Properly said, the first two plans form a whole, which the third one is radically different from. The kingdom of the law and the kingdom of the spirit or of the divine grace, they stay face to face. The first one is being governed by God like Upholder; the second one is being governed by Jesus Christ, the Savior Son of God.

God did not create the people in order to bury them, row after row, on the basis of an implacable law. This is not a goal of the history. He created them to grow up to the capacity of eternal communication with Him and amongst themselves. The order of the nature and the social order He created only like a ground which the people to grow up on, towards this eternal communion. If they had been raised up towards this destination, the order would have been absorbed into their being, for their being itself pushed on that direction. But, by not accepting to raise up towards communion, there is the danger to fall down also from order, reaching into conflict with the order.

A history combined only of the part of the nature and of the State, it would have been therefore not only without any goal, but opposite to the goal and, so, abnormal. God doesn't allow this one like a definitive form, but, after the falling of the mankind into sin, He prepares again the establishment of a kingdom of the

divine grace. The history itself, into this fallen state, it longs after the filling of itself with the Revelation and with the godlike powers, which to illuminate its path and to help it to tend towards the real goal.

The Church established by God, the one close to the people, it is the kingdom of the divine grace, which the man is elevated in to the communication with God and, by this, he is destined to an eternal and happy life. Any man elevated into the frame of this history, he was saved from the inutility of a life ended into death, like one lived only on the plan of the physical and social legality. The embodied Son of God, and ascended on the right hand of the Father, He leads this elevation of the people onto the plan of the Church, of the salvation through communion with Him. This is the true goal of the history. And this work of Jesus it is the proper leading of the world. At this one participate our humanity assumed by the Son of God, and we are all of us participating to it through our liberty and through the power of Jesus Christ from within us. For the efficacy of this work it has been instituted the new method at the rudder of the world, on the godlike throne.

This new method still is not so new to be opposite to the being of God.

This was from the beginning the intention of God regarding the world. God is - in His deep - love and will towards communion.

But this intention does not exclude His intention to uphold the world, through the preservation of the physical and social legality. This is only the little, comprised into much more. In the regime of love, the legality is not abolished either in the governing work of God, or in the life of the man. But it is absorbed, so that the individuals who have entered the communion they no longer find it like something embarrassing, and Jesus Christ does not make from it a punishing application. The legality becomes a respiration into the

substrate of the being; it is no longer a separate method and an object of special preoccupation.

Until all the people enter the full relation of communion with God, the spiritual zone of the Church, on the throne of the world must exist also the governing form of the reality regarded in itself and with a punishing application. This is not used against the loving method of Jesus Christ, but in favor of it; the Father contributes the world to be submitted to the authority of the Son. The physical and state legality must be kept with the force, against the ones who, by refusing the communion, they tend towards disorder. And even in order to ease their eventual ulterior changing of their mind, being given that the bitter experiences gathered through the conflict with the order can be an instrument towards recollection, a pedagogue towards the true teacher, Jesus Christ.

Properly-said, this method has been having, in ultimate analyze, the goal of saving of the world. But, even if it is necessary towards this goal, to a certain point, it cannot do it by itself.

So, the Church is the goal of the history. The absorption one after another of the people into history, in order to pass them into the eternity of the happy communion, it is the goal of the entire earthly life. This does not mean that the state is not necessary. But it is necessary like a precondition for the Church. The Church won't ever deny the legitimacy of the State and won't fight against the State as such, but the Church will try to make each citizen a member of it of such a behavior and spiritual ascent, so that to fulfill like an internal commandment, minimal for him, everything the state legislates for the good cohabitation of the citizens. In this way, in a certain sense, the Church is necessary to the State and it raises up the best citizens of the State. Of course, neither the State must forget about its role to be a precondition for the salvation of the people, so not to impede them to search their

salvation through the faith in God and not to hinder the church in its savior work.

The Church won't ever say a word against the State, in principle. But it will try to raise any man at such a condition, that to him the State to be somehow surpassed, so that he to fulfill without being forced by the State, like a minimum, everything the State can ask him.

When all the people reached this condition, becoming the consummate members of the Church, totally purified of sin and with a full capacity of communion with God and amongst themselves, the State would disappear by itself, not by being abolished through propaganda or external combat, but by being absorbed with its being, which is the equitable order, into the being of the Church.

But on earth won't never be reached such a state. Even if all the people became Christians, themselves the Christians, like earthly people, they would traverse diverse phases of life, which prove their imperfection. We all need the State, even if we are into Church. Both these order of life help us; the State helps us by force, the Church by divine grace, in order to maintain ourselves and to progress towards perfection.

In the light of the goal represented into history by the Church, we can understand the history only if we watch at it not only like an area into which every generation can gain its salvation, but also like a whole which realizes like such a certain sense. The question: why the history continues and until when?, it can be answered now by saying something else than God hadn't finish bringing all the faces to existence, and the history would have ended when God had finished pouring into world all the people whom He decided to create.

The history will continue until it will have been fully done, besides the salvation of some individuals from so many generations of people, its sense, or until it will no

longer able to serve the goal to be an arena which the people to gain their salvation in. It seems like these two answers stay in a close connection.

The general sense of the history must be a fullest possible explanation, verification, and framing into the universal-human experience of the truth of the Revelation, which is not something else but the manifestation of God towards people like a subject of communion with the calling towards communion. And this means just the spiritual fulfillment of the mankind. In all the generations, starting with Jesus Christ, there is a big crowd of people who lives with the absolute certitude of the Revelation of God into Jesus Christ and in the communion established between them like being on earth and Him like sitting on the right hand of the Father. Also into this faith of them, which expresses the reality of the fact, they are saved. But as much they live in early époques, as much their fate, even of an absolute character, it is less amplified like light which, developed parallel with the experience of the generation and with the exploration of the physical and spiritual Universe, in order to became a crowning of a maximum understanding, verified itself by the necessity with which it is asked after it the sum of the human experience and understanding. We have seen that a part of the human culture it is the constantly increased sum of the knowledge of the nature for necessities of adaptation and of the law of human cohabitation for the same necessities. Another part is everything that human spirit adds in the effort to exceed the time. All this culture longs, vaguely but intensely, for the truth of the communion of the man with God, like longing for a fulfillment, without being able to produce, by itself, the certitude of this communion, and to establish the ideal mode of it. The divine Revelation, descended into the riverbed of the human spirit, it is parallel illuminated with the multiplying of the experience of the man about himself

and about the world and it appears increasingly like a crowning of this experience, by becoming the most important part of the human culture. Today, much more than few hundred years ago, the truth of the Revelation into Jesus, without being changed, it is more profoundly understood, more amply, and put in a connection with the whole plus of the knowledge and the nature, and of the man, achieved during this interval, imposed by this plus, verified through it and, at its turn, illuminating it.

It is not, in what we are saying, about a progress of the culture, taken in an objective meaning, or a matter of knowledge, but it is about the total stages of knowledge which the individuals believe in. The believers, after hundreds or after thousands of years, even if they believe in the same unique truth of the Revelation, with the same absolute certitude, in their conscience this truth confirms and crowns – being in the same time confirmed and illuminated – a vaster and deeper human experience.

God wants His revealed truth to reach to be understood and lived in the whole its amplitude and deepness, of which the association with the experience and with the knowledge of this world - which we live into - it can be occasioned. Everything this world can offer us, like maximum knowledge and deed, it must be done the environment to which and which the light of the Revelation to be projected increasingly ampler through.

There was affirmed that there does not exist a spiritual progress of the mankind, because each time discovers another aspect of the reality only by sacrificing the previous spirituality. The mankind has not discovered yet the mechanical order of the Universe with all its laws, but by losing its capacity to see that in the Universe there isn't only a mechanical order, but there are also a biological one and another

spiritual, which obey other laws²²⁸. But, even if the line of the progress is not continuous and it is not inscribe its route – somehow phylo-genetic – in all the consciences, there still exists a progress. After the past mechanistic époque, we stay at the beginning of one which seems to have the capacity to synthesize the mechanistic perspective with the biologic and spiritual ones.

Any vision about the world from the past times it determines or enters, like a wider synthesis, the future visions, even if not in the immediately following époque.

Even more, any individual icon about the world it influences the icons of the fellow humans, which, at their turn, they influence mine.

The vision of the world and of the life it depends on the perspective which we are placed everyone into, according to the time, the place, and the spiritual-bodily configuration²²⁹. This vision is modified with every new element of knowledge, of experience, and of absorption of other visions. My spiritual contents are differently ordered, there are established amongst them new relations, it is widened the horizon in total, another point reaches to the centre, a new light falls on more peripheral corners and its rays modify the sight

²²⁸ Professor PhD medic K. v. Neergards, *Die Aufgabe des 20 Jahrhunderts*, Erlenbach-Zürich, Eugen Rentsch Verlag, 1940.

²²⁹ Karl Heim, in *Glaubensgewissheit* 1923 and *Glaube und Denken*, 1934, vol. I, p. 90, and the followings, taking into account also the theory of the relativity, he considers that any face of the world depends on a “centre of perspective” (perspektivistische Mitte), which is not anything else but the “self” which is always into a point of the space and of the time (even if it seems to him that does not change the space, he still changes it, because also the space flows with the time, forming with the time and with the contents from them a whole in continuous development, according to the theory of relativity).

of the whole²³⁰. Each of these individual and collective visions, which are modified in time, it comprises an aspect of the world, by understanding the world not like an objective reality, like it isn't possible to be, but like a relation between me, the world, and the fellow human creatures.

Each of them comprises a truth and, because that truth determines the future ones and it is absorbed itself into that ones, the form of the world becomes increasingly adequate to the complex reality, which through this it is also created further more. If after a time a vision seems not to be true anymore, not to forget that it has conditioned the new truth or it has been absorbed itself into this new truth. Every man left a trace in the big drawing which is being built by the entire mankind, respectively in the common endeavor to get closer, through knowledge, to the real world, but also to bring further the world's creation²³¹.

²³⁰ Louis Lavelle, *De l'Acte*, p. 46, "Et tout résultat nouveau que j'obtiens change tous les autres, j'obtiens des rapprochements imprévus. In n'y a pas jusqu'à mon point de départ même qui me paraisse chaque fois nouveau. Dès lors il est impossible que mes connaissances puissent s'accroître régulièrement selon une droite; elles forment au contraire une solidarité selon une droite elles forment au contraire une solidarité circulaire qui ne comporte aucune commencement". According to Simon Frank, any new determinant from the unity of the Whole determines more exactly the contents determined earlier, because the determination of a content constitute into the establishing of the reports with as many as possible parts from the One, who we know in different degrees in each moment (*La connaissance et l'être*, Paris, Aubier, p. 207).

²³¹ Louis Lavelle, w. c. p. 43 : "Ma vie trace en lui (dans l'univers) un sillon qui est nouveau par rapport à moi, mais qui este éternel par rapport à lui". "Car, par rapport au système, tout être qui vie a une position unique a privilégiée, de telle sorte que sa perspective sur le monde ne vaut que pour lui seul: elle est, dansé un système qui n'est connu que de lui.

But the report of the individual man with the world it has no other goal, but to accomplish him. In this way, every one transmitting his perspective to another one, he contributes also to the accomplishment of that one.

The perspective of everyone gets richer with the perspective of everybody. All the consciences grow up solidary, and increase the knowledge of the creation, and the creation itself, in solidarity²³².

Behold another reason why every individual will be held accountable, at the final judgment, for the development of the entire mankind. This responsibility for the whole, we feel it, otherwise, each of us, in the bosom of our conscience²³³.

D'autre part, son existence tout entière, e une suite de rencontres; mais chaque rencontre este transformée pour lui en occasion, de telle sorte que le monde reçoit pour lui une signification spirituelle et personnelle que le système même ne réussira point à traduire... C'est a dire que, si nous restons toujours in contact avec le réel, nous découvrons successivement des vérités qui s'ajoutent. Ainsi doit se former sans que l'on ait voulu un système qui este celui des choses elles-mêmes... ", p. 47.

²³² "Chaque conscience a besoin the tout les autre pour la soutenir. Et si l'on voulait dire qu'il suffit qu'elle reste en rapport avec l'infinité même de l'acte où elle puisse dans un dialogue solitaire, on montrait que les autres consciences sont précisément pour elle les médiatrice grâce aux quelle elle entre en communication avec lui d'une manière de plus profonde, par un série indéfinie de suggestions et d'épreuves qui mettent sans cesse en jeu des formes nouvelles de participation", p. 185.

²³³ "Notre responsabilité à l'égard de l'être total est un témoignage en faveur the son unité ; in n'y a point d'être particulier qui ne se sente compatible de l'univers entier ; in sent qu'il doit prendre en main le charge même de la création" (p. 90). "Le moindre de nos gestes ébranle le monde ; il est solidaire de tous les mouvements qui le remplissent" p. 89. "Tous les gestes que nous faisons modèlent tour à tour toutes les formes du réel, les multiplient, les transforment et prennent leur

But in this process of consciences' growing up, by the widening and deepening the perspectives upon the life and by multiplying the creation, the central factor is the divine Revelation. At its light it is being clarified the existence, and its truth is being verified and deepened by the endeavors of the knowledge of the mankind. The Revelation is the main factor that urges the consciences towards the continuation of the creation of the world on the ascendant line, indicated by its sense, for it determines the people to a noble activation, to the creation of the relations of love and of righteousness into world.

One could say that the world will end, so, when there would be exhausted not only the possibilities of deepening the sense of the world, in the light, of the Revelation and vice versa, but also the possibilities of conformation of the world to the ideals comprised into the Revelation.

The mankind, which will continue beyond the history, must carry with itself a conscience, into which the light of the understanding and the way of living of the revealed truth it must reach the maximum amplitude which it could occasion its living into history. One would say that only the people from the last period, they would have such a conscience and, consequently, they will have a better situation in the existence which will continue, though it is not a personal merit that they have lived later. But between the generations of people there is a close solidarity. Like from the previous generation the ulterior ones receive their faith and the reason of experience and their own knowledge, in the same way their plus of understanding it will be shared to all the previous generations, through the communion into which will be called all the people, at the final judgment and after

that. All the previous generations contributed to the production of this plus; all of them must be partakers to it.

We mentioned in another place that the universal judgment, from the end, it is different from the personal judgment, which is done on every man, when he dies, because the happiness and the punishment will be bigger. This is the doctrine of the Orthodox Church, unlike the one of the Catholic Church, which affirms that the universal judgment won't bring anything new, being a simple festivity of history's ending. The Orthodox doctrine is proven like the most conform one to the solidarity of the mankind and to the unity of the history.

Like we highlighted into an anterior chapter, the righteousness or the worthlessness of the man, it is not unveiled in their fullness but according to what his words and his deeds shown their fruits like, into their descendants. God knows those words and deeds from before, so that He could judge right, at the death of every one. But the divine judgment is right, not only for it leans on the authority of God, but for it imposes to the conscience of the man, to see himself that he was not disadvantaged. The man himself must contemplate all his deeds and their consequences. But the man, by not being endowed with foreknowledge, he cannot see this consequences but only after it was consumed the life of his followers. The life of these ones is not unveiled in its fullness but only after they will see, themselves, at their turn, the consequences of their deeds and so on. Only at the final judgment, where will be present all the people and it will be established to each of them what is influence from other and what is own contribution, it could be utter the full right judgment. The mankind is, in fact, a multiple unity, tied through all kind of wires.

Thereby, the forerunners will be judged for what they brought good and for what they brought bad in

their life and in their endeavor, to the conscience of the followers. A good fructification into the descendants, though, it is the amplification of the understanding of the divine Revelation. Consequently, also from this point of view, the final judgment won't be a simple speaking over each individual taken separately, but also a judgment over the total result of the endeavors of the mankind into history.

In the light of these thoughts the dogma of the Church about the contribution which the living ones can bring, namely the descendants, to ease the fate of the dead ones, through prayer and mercy, gain a wider meaning. Through our prayers and mercy for the forefathers, it is amplified and raised our Christian conscience, becoming a factor of determination in the same direction for our descendants and, in the same time, showing like being good the fruits of the influence that our forefathers have had upon us²³⁴.

Only in this vision the culture gains an important meaning. In association with the faith the culture determines the state of conscience which the mankind must continue after death its existence with.

²³⁴ Of course, we do not affirm that the sense of the prayers for the dead ones it is exhausted through this one. Their meaning of compassion of God the merciful, through the showing of our solidarity in love, it still remains. Maybe is more appropriate to mention here the theory of N. Fedorov (1828 – 1903), who, into his writing *"The Philosophy of the Common Work"*, he sustains that we can resurrect our ancestors, but not through prayer and mercy, but through science and technique, because, finally, the science will reach – through the work of the people – the stage to be able to gather the energies of the ancestors from the cosmic space and to concentrate them again into their body. Through science and industry, the mankind can do everything on world, because the science and the industry hasn't been created by God, in some frames, but like a material of all the possibilities. N. Fedorov proves to be more an antecessor of the Bolsheviks, than a Christian thinker. See about him: Prot. G. Florovschî, Puti ruscago Bogoslovîa, Paris, 1937, p. 322, and the followings.

If there hadn't been life after the grave, the culture wouldn't have made any sense. If, in the end, the mankind had totally, and from everywhere, disappeared, and there hadn't been a conscience which to evaluate the human culture and to enjoy it, which to be widened and elevated forever and ever, what importance could have still had?

The culture is important only if the mankind will pass from history in an eternal life, and it will carry with itself the total result of the spiritual endeavor from here.

But to the eternal life of the happy communion with God would be partakers only the ones that have become capable of it, through faith and the love for God and for the people, during their life from here.

Only in association with this faith and by serving it, the culture has served to the illumination of the deepest mysteries of the existence. Without faith and love, the culture is blind and blind are they who pass away only with the culture from the life from here.

After these considerations it is now the moment to ask ourselves: when the history will come to an end? There may not be about a determination of the moment which the history will end in, because this must remain hidden to the man, but there may be a clarification of the way which the history will fulfill its role in. Of course, God could put an end to the history anytime He wants, without waiting for a fulfillment of the history's meaning, but for God, usually, He makes the work of His will to appear also like an effect of the natural development of the human works, the end of the history is most probable to mean also an end of history's possibilities. It is, so, to believe that the history would end when the living into it would have nothing more to offer, either because there will have been exhausted all the possibilities of multiplication of the knowledge of the world and of increasingly noble behavior of the man in this limited framework, or

because of, through increasingly terrible sinful decay of the most people, the order could not be reestablished, and an even more prolonged disorder will make impossible the continuation of such a progress.

The big and the small Apocalypse, like also the experience, until now, of the mankind, they plead for an interweaving of these two cases, in the sense that during the passing of the time, the fight between Christ and Satan and between the disciples of the First One and the servants of the last one, it will increasingly radical, increasingly bitter, until it will be decided in favor of Jesus Christ²³⁵.

Of course the history does not pass in a continuous way into eschatology. "The eschatology supposes an interruption, an transcendental - into this stays the idea of the end. Though, according to the evangelical Apocalypse, like also to the Apocalypse of John, the world must become ripe for the end and the history ends inwardly, when the history will have

²³⁵ To be seen in Fr. Buri, w. c. p. 84-5 similar ideas about the progress of the world in good, but also about the intensity of the parallel growth of the bad, in the so-called theory of the history of salvation (Heilgeschichte), represented by M. Kähler, A. Schlatter and W. Koepp. The work of H. W. Schmidt, *Zeit und Ewigkeit*, it is an attempt to theologically – systematically establish this conception and to philosophically demonstrate the possibility of the passing of the time into eternity (die Möglichkeit eines Übergangs der Zeit in die Ewigkeit resp. des Eintritts des Ewigen in die Zeit). "Die Halbzeitlichkeit der abgefallenen und sündigen Kreatur mündet Kraft Gottes wundermächtiger Gegenwart ein in die Herzlichkeit der Vollzeitlichkeit", says Schmidt, p. 309 or: „das Heilsgeschehen besteht darin dass Göttlich-Vollzeitlichkeit immer mehr die verhüllenden Momente seiner Offenbarung ausscheidet, bis zuletzt mit der Parusie des Christus das zeit-immanente Ewige alle Zurückhaltung innerhalb des Offenbarungsvollzugs fallen lässt und sein ungebrochenes Wesen eideutig veranschaulicht“, p. 321.

fulfilled hits work”²³⁶. The end does not come like a *Deus ex machina*. “But the work of the history it is not only an algebraic sum of an endless string of works of the persons isolated into their random chaos, but a positive whole, enchained after an organic law and this law is Christ, “(1Co:8:6) (...) by whom are all things, and we by him”. In the other words, the history of the mankind after the embodiment, with all the fervor of the fight between the light and the darkness, between the Christianity and the Anti-Christianity, with all its though dialectical antithesis, it is worked the work of Jesus and are lost the ones who, with their attention absorbed only by the singular moments of the historical tragedy, but its antagonisms, they see it in its totality only under the appearance of Antichrist, of general decay and depravation, reducing it, if not at a zero, to a negative measurement. In any case, not this is the content of the Apocalypse with its figures about the tragic antagonism, but also the victories and the establishing of Christ like a ruler on earth, after the first resurrection, like also the descending of the heavenly fortress at the end”²³⁷.

For Bulgakov the development of the history would culminate, it seems, into a perfecting of the entire creational system, in such a way that the end to not means anything else but a transposition of it in a transfigured form on a transcendent plan, into a fully rehabilitated communion of the world with God, into a remaking of the Sophia form of the creation. The world would end, so, when would reach the end the development of its possibilities of perfecting under the leadership of Jesus Christ, in the framework of this order.

The problem of the unbeliever ones it is not put with acuity at Him. The question: “What would happen

²³⁶ S. Bulgakov, p. 461.

²³⁷ S. Bulgakov, p. c.

with them at the end?" does not occur, at all, into his book.

But the vision of the full maturation of the world for its transfiguration into the eternal union with God, it must be completed with the vision of the last evil's development, so that to be ripen for the final judgment and for the eternal condemnation. "The idea of the final judgment it would be incomplete if there wasn't tied to it in, in the same time, the notion of a completion of the evil and of the justification of its condemnation through the second arrival of the Lord"²³⁸.

Of course, the evil will of Satan, taken in itself, it is whenever ripen for the eternal condemnation (*Die Reife des satanisches Willens*). But here is about reaching this stage of the mankind as enemy to God, about the last fruit of the satanic will, through its influence upon people.

The end of the world and the final judgment will be brought also by such a development and petrification into evil of a part of the mankind, so that, on one hand, not to fit there any hope of its straightening, and on the other hand, its eternal condemnation to the fully justified. We could not even imagine that degree of bitterness against God, and of obduracy into that. That is why it is hard to us to understand the eternal condemnation. The obduracy of a part of the mankind into evil must reach to that satanic measure, so there to be nothing more to do for its straightening, the spiritual death of the hell not being anymore but an organic consequence.

This state will make impossible the living of the believers on earth. So, the consummation of the good ones it will equal the capacity of each one to receive death like a martyr, and the consummation of the evil,

²³⁸ W. Küneth, *Die Theologie der Auferstehung*, p. 259. "Der Gerichtsgedanke wäre unvollständig wenn nicht zugleich mit ihm der Begriff einer Vollendung des Bösen und seines Gerichtet werdens in der Parusie verbunden ist."

with the absolute interdiction of the existence of the believers. The world will have developed to maximum its possibilities in both directions²³⁹. Not only

²³⁹ Wilhelm Koepp, in *“Die Welt der Ewigkeit“*, Berlin-Lichterfelde, Edwin Runge-Verlag, 1921, he thinks that like the individual dies of old age, likewise the mankind, as a whole, it will come to an end by getting old. The getting old of the individual it means not only an exhaustion and a physical stiffening, but also a “callousness of the vital creator power, and a mechanization of the personality”, the man becoming incapable of something new. But the believer, who anticipatorily tastes the infinite life of the eternity, he doesn’t get old with his soul, but his life is continuously inwardly renewed. Death is to him, therefore, not a emaciation of his spiritual vitality, but a passing to “eternal youth”, full, and unhindered by something (p. 32). In this way the mankind will be with like a whole too. The idea of an endless progress of the mankind it started to be considered by the newest cogitation an utopia. They are speaking about the childhood, the youth, and the aging and death of the cultures (Oswald Spengler). But like the cultures are aging, it is extremely probable that the mankind will age too. We can add to this the rapid means of propagation of the ideas in the broad strata of the society, namely the technique, as they are hurrying up the process of the aging of the mankind. After the less developed peoples will have been pulled out from the state of nature, through the means of rapid civilization of the technique, what reserves of youth would the world still have? The state of senescence of the mankind it is describe by Koepp with the analogy to senescence of the individual and, especially, according to the example of so many historical cultures, which got old and died: “all will be senile, tired, weary, mechanized, obdurate, pure civilization, exhausted life, an exterior life, without a soul... a life of orgies with the illusion of rejuvenation, attachment to world, total lack of morality, an affectedness interweaved with the unchaining of any bestial passion, a skepticism and a despaired pessimism in front of the human helplessness to remake the spiritual vigor of the mankind” (p. 35). It would not mean this an aging also of the ones who believe? Koepp answers

positively, but also negatively the people contributes to the coming of the end. Among people live very much these new ideas, manifested into the thought that, at the end, God will no longer tolerate the worsened mankind. The world will end in this way, not through unfounded intervention of God, but by the fact that people will impose the end, by making of the world an arena of continuous laceration, especially of the good ones²⁴⁰.

negatively. He indicates the example of the groups which, in the middle of disappearing cultures, they were manifesting the most powerful spiritual vitality, for instance, the Christianity at its appearance in Palestine and Minor Asia, or the examples from the individual life, which show us individuals who are not subjected to the general law of spiritual aging. The Christian community will increase in the Christian living and it will reach the highest peaks, as the mankind, in general, it will get away from God and it will persecute the faith. "At the end, when the mankind will come closer to its death, the world of the ones without God it will gather all the dying power for a last worship of the immanent and towards a radical persecution of all it is divine and eternal. And so, the ultimate fate of God's kingdom on earth it will be the following: outside enmity and persecution like never was, and inside and in the middle of this persecution, the burning love, all the greater, of a Johannine époque" (p. 38).

²⁴⁰ Even S. Bulgakov - who speaks in such an accentuated manner, about the development of the world according to a plan from above the people - he affirms in some places that the end of the world depends also on people. The people may hasten it or they may delay it. "The second coming of Christ is not only a unilateral act, but a bilateral one, like the first coming. There must come the time for it. And that time, together with other conditions, it is determined also through the human liberty. **Hanging by this** the time can be shortened or prolonged, even this at God's command, Who establishes the times and the moments. In this sense, the second coming appears not only like a godlike deed, but also like a human work, which it is done on the ways of the

Somehow, on earth is allowed latitude to the master of this world and to his servants, to do all the evil that they are capable of, in order their eternal condemnation to be fully justified. Also in this way, it is fully established the worthiness of the righteous ones to the eternal happiness and of the unbelievers to the endless torment.

Into the liberty let to the evil one on earth, it is also the cause for which in this eon the victory of the believers is nothing else but patience in sufferance. Like Christ, His mystical body lives in kenosis, in love, in humbleness and patience, by being exposed to beatings and persecution, from the evil ones.

Though, not into a kenosis in the Protestant meaning, according to which there wouldn't have been even possible to know the godhead and His glory. Like Jesus was known by the ones who didn't voluntarily blind themselves, likewise it can be the Church known,

history" (p. 464). P. Althaus, "Die letzten Dinge", 1933, affirming that "the signs of the end" from Apocalypse refers to the events contemporary to the writer, he sustains that the world will have not to fulfill a plan before and then the end to come. This idea would numb into us the tension, the waiting, and the awareness, it would make from eschatology a simple theory, instead of being a vital matter. The dominant idea of the Apocalypse is that God can come in any moment and, so, we must be continuously ready, like in any moment our personal death could come (p. 265-268). But, without excluding the possibility of the end in any moment and, though, we cannot depreciate the creation and the history, in such a degree, to not admit the fact that God seeks through them, a certain sense. This attitude could agree the Protestantism, to which there is not, in creation and in history, any positive sense, because the form of God into man was totally destroyed and it cannot be restored. But we must say that we can be wrong in our appreciations upon the way in which would look like, the fulfilled form of the world.

with the holiness, with the love, and with all its supernatural gifts.

The victory and the greatness of the adherents to Christ it would shine at the end, in enduring the death of the martyrdom. Even in the acts which the evil thinks that it can celebrate his triumph in, there will still shine the victory of the Christianity.

The idea of an end of the history, caused by a progress of the man into evil, it could appear not according to the greatness of God, Who could not admit to see the failure of the world created by Him and to be imposed the world's liquidation by people. In fact, God does not put an end to the actual form of the world because He is forced by this development of the things. We make abstraction of the fact that this development is partially due to Him too, because He put Jesus Christ like "stone of stumbling" in the middle of the history, like a face directed continuously and claiming towards history in its course.

But even if the history does not reach such a phase, the divine act of its stopping seems to be founded, God could not produce this act, but He let the people to tear themselves apart, and after this general tearing apart to start the history of their development from the beginning. Of course, this wouldn't be but a repetition of the anterior course of the history, not bringing anything new like a achievement of the spirit.

But God isn't a God of repetition, or of monotony.

The actual form of the world, by being temporal and relative, it seems like the spiritual progress cannot be but limited into its framework, enclosed into a certain circle. When the mankind will have reached, like whole, the limits of this circle, respectively will have has cut off its possibilities of progress, the present form of the world will have ended its existence.

A condition of the progress towards good, which can be thought also a cause of the last step of the egotism

and disorder, it is the multiplying of the people. Through the form of His Son, Who made Himself man and sacrificed Himself for the people, God submits us, through this fact, in the most acute form and more pressing, to the test of the love for people. Through the multiplication of the people, He forces us or to raise up to the supreme capacity of love and sacrifice, of restraint and patience, or to fall into the supreme petrification, carelessness, and perpetual hatred. When people were rarer, they neither were so categorically challenged to the decision of love - of a practical love and not a theoretical one - nor to the one of hatred. The problem of the distribution of the goods was easy. Everyone had the means to live and some of them could freely rejoice of their land. With the time passing, the faces of the people increasingly crowd our sight, forcing us both to categorical attitudes of love or of adversity, but also to the need of voluntarily or forcedly share our piece of bread with them.

The man, indicated to us like the supreme duty, by the humanization of the Son of God, he becomes, through the multiplication of the human species, increasingly more, the test of fire which we grow up in love through, or we fall into spiritual death. Only if we appropriate the faith in Christ, the faith commanded by Christ, which is the same with the conviction that through our fellow human we are welcomed by God's claiming, we can raise ourselves up to the height of this exam and we can grow up on the measure its pretensions increase. Otherwise, the social problem become so difficult to the mankind then it succumbs under its burden, but it succumbs choked by hatred which erupts out of it like from a volcano. On the radical decision of the mankind, for or against Christ, like a supreme valorization of the human face of the fellow human, there hangs the continuation or the end of its existence. So, not the mankind by itself is the one causing the end of the world, but the way the

mankind answers the its answer the exam which it is called and advised through Jesus Christ to, and which becomes even more pressing and demanding.

This exam cannot be avoided: it must be answered, positively or negatively. Through the impediment of the multiplication of the people, the exam is not avoided, but it is answered negatively. Any way to avoid the exam or to answer differently than positively, namely through love, it is considered a negative answer and it means the total falling in the spiritual death through the killing of brothers, like the most awful sin. The positive or the negative answer to this exam is not a momentarily one, but it is for the entire history. Even if the negative answer reaches only a moment of the history, so generally that it produces the total spiritual death of the people, it has been given by the entire history. If people have reached today to consider the contraception - or any other sins against the fellow human - as an easy thing, a big part of the guilt is worn by all the ancestors who through theories and practices have produced this atmosphere of spiritual decomposition. Like the ancestors who have preceded with the belief and with their god seeding deed they will endless impart by all the history has realized into the direction of the good, in the same way the ancestors who seeded the evil will be endless burdened of all the condemnable fruit of the history. From all the saying from above results that history will not end through the force of predestination, into evil. The Apocalypse does not prescribe like an inevitable will of God, its frowning end.

If the mankind grew up in spirit on the measure of the ever harder exam imposed by its multiplication, it would reach such a consummation than the passing into heavenly union with God it would be made easier. Probably in this case the ones ripen in evil they would be fewer and the tone of the time of the history's end it would be given by the progress into good.

We have presented in this problem an example that the themes of the history are the ones given by the Revelation into Jesus Christ. Either takes a positive or a negative attitude towards them, the history is driven by God on the road which forces the history to struggle exactly with the themes implied by the Revelation and this is for the reason that the Revelation has pulled out just the most essential and deep faces of the reality. After two thousand years from the time Jesus Christ has unveiled Himself to mankind, like the most valuable reality, the face of the fellow human, the history finds that its biggest theme is that one of the man and of the means to support the man into existence. All the doctrines of the new forms of states they represent a titanic effort to solve the big problems caused by the multiplication of the people and by their needs. Despite all of these, the exclusivist passions and the exaggeration of the material pretensions show that these doctrines are not on the right track. And their persistence into a wrong attitude, into such a huge problem, it may have catastrophic consequences, as such as making the peaceful continuation of the history impossible.

From a certain time, the history, in fact, it cannot continue without the general adoption of the attitude which results from the light of the Embodiment, because the themes which derive from it are put so radically, so that one must adopt a pro or a contra attitude. From a certain time, the sword that Jesus has brought into world it starts dividing the mankind in the most irreducible way and this is not because it would be put directly and formally the problem of the adherence or of non-adherence to Jesus Christ, but because there cannot be avoided anymore the themes indicated by the embodiment of the Son of God.

We could remind here another theme related to the one from before, which the mankind from today has reached in the phase that it must answer it. It is the

theme which Jesus Christ, like King-Lamb, like Leader and Lord Who gains His authority upon souls and the right to lead them, through sacrifice and love, He has given it to the mankind, and which only today imposes us with all the force. It is the theme of social organization, which the leaders to remark themselves in, through their special capacity of love and sacrifice for the ruled ones. Our time could no longer avoid this theme. The human conscience has been developed on the line set by the divine Revelation and indicated by Jesus Christ like King-Lamb.

But, no matter how much it is forced to assume this theme and to recognize the justness of the Christian answer, through the fact that it wants to imitate it, the mankind from today it seems not to be, even in this concern, able to give a Christian honest answer. Its answer is rather a distortion of the Christian answer. And without an authentic Christian answer it cannot find equilibrium of cohabitation and social organization.

But, whatever would be the state which the mankind will arrive to, at the end of the history, on the basis of its decision related to the themes proposed by the revelation and by the reality, the fact is that when it will take place an intervention of Jesus Christ, through which "(Apoc. 20: 10) (...) the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophets are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever".

The satanic will, it is going to be ejected from the human community. The righteous ones no longer are going to be forced to endure this evil will or its plots.

They will be overcome, together with Jesus, so totally upon the satanic power, so that it is going to be fully and definitively banished from them and locked into the lake of fire.

This collapse of the satanic power will coincide to

the full revealing of Jesus Christ at His second coming. Then He won't come hidden into humbleness and human patience, but into the unmistakable showing of His godlike power. The time of free decision for Him or against Him will have passed. In the first time He came hidden into humbleness not to force anyone, through the constraining glory of the unveiled godhead, in order to forcedly accept Him. But after everyone have freely decided into history and the history itself in general – which becomes inutile or impossible by this – for Him or against Him, He will come unveiled and His showing will be a strike of lightening to the ones who will realize now that they were not into the truth²⁴¹.

²⁴¹ Louis Lavelle develops in his book *“De l'Acte”*, insistently, the theory that the Universe is a given which we do not notice but only if we also give ourselves, through our thought, feeling, through our love. Through our spiritual activity we discover more and more aspects of the Universe. But also vice versa: through our lack of love for it, through the lack of the positive will towards reality, the Universe, though present in itself like a given from God, it gradually disappears to us, it sinks into nebulosity. Each thing – though existent in itself – we must actualize it personally in order to really know it. In this way, all the contours are fading. “En ce sens nous pouvons dire que le donné, c'est nous qui nous le donnons et c'est pour cela qu'il s'évanouirait un seul moment de le soutenir par un acte qui le pose » (p. 295). « On peut se servir ici encore une fois de la comparaison du regard qui tient tout le réel devant lui de telle sorte que, pour peu qu'il s'obscurcisse, le réel recule et se dissipe » (p. 304). « Le sensible à son tour présent d'autant plus de délicatesse et d'éclat que l'acte qui le saisit à lui-même plus de force et plus de subtilité ; mais il ne peut être que saisi par nous ; et ni l'attention la plus aigüe ne suffit à la produire ni le schématisme le plus savant des opérations mathématique ne réussit à en tenir lieu. Il faut toujours qu'il soit pour nous un rencontre par laquelle l'acte même qui le recherche trouve sa récompense, et prouve en quelque sorte sa valeur ontologique » (p. 305). The hell would be the radicalization of this fading into darkness of

His showing will be the condemnation of them and the coronation of the ones who believed. The collapse of the unbelievers will mean also the collapse of Satan, who will lose all his courage - and also the courage of his adherents to work for their target it will be abolished.

The evil without the possibility to work for conquering new victims, the evil reduced to himself, it includes the supreme unhappiness in this. The evil individual, as long as he is still free in his movements, he soothes his internal disgust and his loathing through the illusion that he has work to do, through the pleasure to corrupt what is still good, through the hope that he will have work to do continuously and he will gain domination upon others, maybe upon all of them. But when this possibility is cut off, and the obduracy in this state is definitive, the unhappiness reaches degrees which we could not even imagine. While it still have power, the evil get himself drunk with a certain satisfaction. The evil remains helpless, definitively helpless - it is the supreme unhappiness.

To the question how Jesus Christ defeats the evil at the end, how He stops the evil to activate any longer

the entire Universe for the ones who had not love for anything else but for themselves. The Universe exists like a mean of communication between men and God and between the human persons. ("Et le monde sensible est précisément l'intermédiaire par lequel ils (les êtres) communiquent et ne cessent de se manifester les uns aux autres une présence intentionnelle » p. 309). To the ones who no longer search for the communion, the Universe makes no sense or it has no meaning. Each of them will enjoy the light of the reality, by the happiness of the connection with it into the measure into which he has searched for it and has accomplished, as state for the life from beyond, the connection with God and with the fellow human creature. In the Romanian language the universe it is called "*world*", for the reality stays in light and sighting. The darkness it is one with the absence of the reality.

and surrounds him? we have not to expect the answer that through an angry expedition of His, at the ultimate end of the patience.

The evil is defeated through the showing of Jesus into His godlike glory, after His believers will have resisted all the devilish efforts to conquered them and after the adherents of the Satan will have cut all the possibilities of shaking off of their master. And the victory means the definitive separation of the evil ones from the good ones, and the banishing of the evil ones from any domain over which they could apply their plans and their works of conquering.

They are banished away from the creation of God. The fact that the Holy Scripture describes the eternal place of the sinful ones like a (Apoc. 20: 10; 14: 15; 2. Pt. 2: 17) “lake of fire”, like a “(Mt. 13: 50) (...) the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth”, like the (Mt. 22: 13) (...) outer darkness”, and the happy fate of the righteous ones whom He brings in connection with a new heaven and a new earth, born after this world will be burned, all these make us to believe that the condemned ones will be removed from the ensemble of the creation, thrown far away from it, outside. They would be unable to enjoy anything, from what is outside of the emptiness of from within them.

All the relation between them and the great order of the creation will be broken. The Universe, into a new form, it remains like ground and like reason for joy, to the righteous ones.

The darkness is the layer of opacity which is laid between the sinful ones and everything that exists outside them. They won't be able to see anything, and the sight is the first condition of communication with something.

The evil ones will not be able to plan anything against God. They will burn eternally into the furnace of fire, being subjected to the endless burning of the fire from inside themselves, which is not something

else but the evil which, by no longer being able to spread it over the world of God, it endlessly torments them. The condemned ones will wail and gnash their teeth, not because of regret - because they no longer have the power of repentance - but, on one hand, because of the torment they endure, and on the other hand, because of the spite not to be able to do any evil anymore. It is the wriggling of the enchained evil.

In his way, not the righteous ones are removed like an exception from the ensemble of the creation of God, but the ones who have made themselves the tolls of the Satan.

These ones, through the nature of the evil from them, they put the distance of the egotism between them and the reality. The communion appears like an appanage of the good. There will be the final state of full closing into their own isolation, into the horror of the total and irremediable loneliness, which is not something else but the state of completion of the evil from within them.

The creation will be saved, in this way, into a new form, which will be not something else but its state of consummate union with the Creator.

When the progress of the righteous ones in their capacity of communion with God, with the fellow humans and with the creation, it will have reach, by the influence of Jesus Christ, the maximum possible degree in the earthly life, then Jesus will show Himself to us together with all the ones capable of communion, consummating the communion of everybody from all the times and changing the form of the present world, on the measure of its consummate communion. The entire Church will resurrect on the plan of the new world together with the Lord. Then Jesus will submit the saved and changed to the face world, to the Father, but He will also submit Himself together with this new

world, for God to be all in everything²⁴². From then it will start the day of the full brotherhood amongst people and of the consummate filiation in report with the Father.

²⁴² “Dem Parallelismus mit der Auferstehung Jesu entspricht weiter die Auferstehung der Gemeinde als enthüllende Vollendung der Herrenkirche. Das Schicksal der Gemeinde das Hauptes ist das Schicksal der Gemeinde; darum im schließt die Auferstehung nicht allein den Einzel, Sondern zugleich das Kollektivum der Kirche. Ein verselbständiger Ewigkeitsindividualismus der die Auferstehung nur in Ichbeziehung sieht, hat in christlicher Eschatologie keinen Raum“. „Die Auferstehung des Kosmos ist die Vollendung der ursprünglichen Schönung Gottes zu einer neuen Schöpfungswirklichkeit“. W. Künerth, w. c. P. 254.